FAIRFIELD UNIVERSITY LIBRARY
3 4106 00222 1039

19910

Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2025

https://archive.org/details/bwb_T4-AKH-323_1

STATE EXPERIMENTS IN AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND

DATE DUE

HIGH SMITH REORDER #45-230

N
ITY

The Edinburgh Geographical Institute

John Bartholomew & Co

STATE EXPERIMENTS

IN

AUSTRALIA & NEW ZEALAND

BY

WILLIAM PEMBER REEVES

AUTHOR OF 'THE LONG WHITE CLOUD.'

FAIRFIELD UNIVERSITY
FAIRFIELD, CONN.

IN TWO VOLUMES

VOL. I

WITHDRAWN
FAIRFIELD UNIVERSITY
LIBRARY

WITH TWO MAPS

LONDON
GRANT RICHARDS
1902

Ergo ipsas quamvis angusti terminus aevi
Excipiat, neque enim plus septima ducitur aestas,
At genus . . . manet

Printed by R. & R. Clark, Limited, *Edinburgh.*

PREFACE

No endeavour is made in this book to give a complete survey of democracy and its working in Australia and New Zealand. What is aimed at is a fairly full and connected account of the more interesting experiments in law and administration during the twenty-one years between the date of the Anti-Chinese Acts of 1881 and the adoption of Women's Franchise by the Commonwealth in May 1902. I did not at the outset select 1881 as a line of cleavage. But, as the work went on, I found that, except in some chapters on the Land Question and a few pages scattered here and there in other places, the contents of the book all had to do with affairs subsequent to 1880. The passing of the Education Act of New South Wales in 1880 may be held to mark the close of the series of struggles between the advocates of National and Denominational Education; and about the same time the policy of constructing public works out of loans ceased to divide parties, inasmuch as all had accepted it. Moreover, if we examine the statutes of 1881 and the next few years, we find Exclusion Laws, Local Option Laws, Perpetual Leases, Village Settlements, the South Australian Land Tax, and the Victorian Factories Act of 1885—all closely connected with similar and more venturesome work in later years. In 1883, too, was published the Report

of the Commission on the Land Laws of New South Wales, the document which did so much to open the eyes of believers in Free Trade in Land. Therefore, though 1881 was in no sense such a year of change or unrest as 1890, it so happens that almost all these chapters deal with matters which have occurred since.

The suggestion that I should write some such book as this was first made to me seven years ago, and a year later I agreed to make the attempt. For the last twenty years my life's business has directly or indirectly touched upon questions treated of here, and some at least of any leisure I have had has been given up to studying them. Even earlier I had learned a little about colonial politics. Yet this undertaking has proved by no means easy. It has had to be carried out thousands of miles away from most of my sources of authority, and with small opportunity of comparing notes with colonial experts. And the book deals with a throng of reforms and changes in seven separate communities—experiments not settled and done with, but nearly all in progress, still matters of controversy —succeeding, failing, expanding, or being patched up month by month. The amount of revision and recasting required has, in consequence, been considerable.

What has held me to a troublesome task has been the stream of inquiries about colonial questions which has come to me without ceasing for the last half-dozen years. Ninety Englishmen out of every hundred may be quite unconcerned about colonial social experiments, and, frankly, I think they are. But there is an increasing number of students in England, on the Continent, and in America who are sincerely interested in them. A book for these students requires no apology, and no such book, covering the necessary

ground, has yet been published in England. There have been many useful magazine articles, of which Mr. Anton Bertram's are much the best. But of books the only general sketch worth mentioning is Mr. H. de R. Walker's, and that, though honest and correct as far as it goes, does not go very deep. Those standard works, Professor Jenks' *Government of Victoria* and Sir Charles Dilke's *Problems of Greater Britain*, are valuable guides up to the end of 1890. But three-fourths of the events about which the inquirer is just now asking questions have occurred since they were written.

Most of the notice given to recent enactments in the Seven Colonies has not come from England, but from France and the United States. In these countries, amongst other writings on the subject, three studies of real merit have appeared. The New Zealand experimentalists have found a whole-hearted champion in Mr. Henry Demarest Lloyd. The neatest and most accurate brief survey of the question, as seen by a traveller through several colonies, is without doubt M. Métin's *Le Socialisme sans Doctrines.* And for a strong yet good-tempered criticism of the Progressive Movement in New Zealand nothing yet written comes up to M. Siegfried's series of articles. From three different standpoints — the cordially sympathetic, the cold-bloodedly impartial, and the steadily critical— these three gentlemen have done their work well so far as New Zealand is concerned. Only M. Métin, however, has much to say about Australia. Moreover, a visitor and foreigner must labour under certain disadvantages when investigating the institutions of a British colony. In any case, these excellent sketches do not stand in the way of issuing a more full account

in England.[1] It is true that the present writer cannot claim to be a dispassionate analyst, for he was a colonial politician and is still a colonial official. But an official may be reasonably candid, and even an ex-politician may try to be fair. As far as may be I have striven to avoid the merely polemical and partisan side of politics in the Colonies. If I could have written as a free lance, these pages might have been livelier; but my primary object has not been to write a bright and diversified book, but to serve unprejudiced students by collecting and classifying facts. Where it has been needful to draw attention to admitted defects or failures I have done so—sometimes sorely against my inclination. Where, as in dealing with very recent events in New Zealand, it would scarcely have done for me to express strong opinions of my own, I have stated facts and summarised Acts and left them to speak for themselves. Not a sentence has been written to disparage the party to which I was opposed when in politics. If certain old friends and allies think these chapters disappointingly pallid and bloodless, I must beg them to forgive me for a book from which personal feeling has perforce been banished, and which is written to give information and not to make converts.

[1] For an introductory outline the student may turn to a paper read by Sir John Cockburn to the Society of Arts, London, in May 1902, and to a discriminating summary by O. J. Alpers in the second part of *Progress of New Zealand in the Century* (Chambers, 1902).

INTRODUCTORY NOTE

About one-fifth of this book has already appeared in print in various magazines and publications. I have to thank the editors of the *National Review*, *Economic Journal*, *Empire Review*, *Saturday Review*, and *Review of Reviews* (Australia) for permission to use contributions or portions thereof. In particular, I have to acknowledge indebtedness to Mr. Loftie, the editor of the *Orient Pacific Guide*, and to the Orient Pacific Company, for allowing me to draw upon my work in their sixth edition for matter which forms about two-fifths of Chapter I. in this volume. I should like to say that all former writing thus transferred has been very carefully revised, in some cases rewritten sentence by sentence. I have to offer most sincere thanks to several of the Australian Governments, to my brother Agents-General, and to other public officers for courteously placing statistics and documents at my disposal; and to express my gratitude to the good-natured friends who have read certain of my chapters in proof.

CONTENTS

CHAPTER I

PAGE

A Continent and some Islands 1

CHAPTER II

The Progressive Movement 59

CHAPTER III

Women's Franchise 103

CHAPTER IV

Federation 143

CHAPTER V

Preferential Voting 181

CHAPTER VI

The Land Question—

From Quit-Rents to Land Sales 192

Colony-making 208

PAGE

The Squatters 218
Free Selection, Cheap Land, and the Conditional Purchase . 231
Land Taxes 251
Repurchase Laws 268
Village Settlements 299
Perpetual Leases 321
Governments as Lenders on Mortgage . . . 329
Departments of Agriculture 359

INDEX 387

CHAPTER I

A CONTINENT AND SOME ISLANDS[1]

THE Dutch seamen were on the Australian coast before us, and might have had the continent for the taking. For a hundred years Dutch navigators, in their small, slow, clumsy-looking, but withal seaworthy ships, crept, one after the other, a little further south or a little further east, along the mangrove-lined beaches of the north; or rounded the tawny headlands of the west; or coasted along the stern barrier formed by the forbidding cliffs of the Great Bight. The quaint names of the Dutch ships, *Heemskirk*, *Gulde Zeepard*, *Zeehan*, *Vossenback*, are sprinkled about over the early pages of many dull Australian books. Place-names bestowed by their captains are still found more or less Anglicised on modern maps; such are Dirk Hartog's Land, Houtman's

[1] AUTHORITIES.—*History of the Australasian Colonies to 1893*, by E. Jenks, Cambridge, 1893; *Land, Travel, and Seafaring*, by Morley Roberts, London, 1891; Dilke's *Greater Britain*, 1868, and *Problems of Greater Britain*, 1890; *The Australians*, by Francis Adams, London, 1893; *The Government of Victoria*, by E. Jenks, London, 1891; *Memoir of George Higinbotham*, by E. Morris, London, 1895; *Rulers and Statesmen of New Zealand*, by William Gisborne, London, 1897; *Newest England*, by H. D. Lloyd, New York, 1900; *Life and Progress in Australasia*, by Michael Davitt, London, 1898; *History of Australian Exploration*, by Ernest Favene, Sydney, 1888; Todd's *Parliamentary Government in the British Colonies*, London, 1880; *Native Tribes of Central Australia*, by B. Spencer and F. J. Gillen, London, 1899; *Advance Australia!* by H. Finch-Hatton, London, 1885; Froude's *Oceana*, London, 1886; *The Long White Cloud*, by W. P. Reeves, London, 1898; *Spinifex and Sand*, by David Carnegie, London, 1898: *The Province of South Australia*, by J. D. Woods (official), 1894; Mennell's

Abrolhos, Cape Leeuwin, New Zealand; while Nuyt's Land, Van Diemen's Land, and others, to say nothing of New Holland, have been erased. Very perseveringly the seamen sent out from Batavia sought for and found all the less valuable and attractive part of the Australian coast line. Fate stopped them just before they reached the better parts of Queensland and South Australia. Victoria and New South Wales none of them set eyes upon. Tasman, indeed, in 1642, just touched on the southern end of Tasmania, and a few weeks later discovered New Zealand and coasted along most of its western side. But Tasman, capable navigator as he was, was hampered by his sailing orders. He was sent to find out how far south and east the Terra Australis stretched. For this purpose he was bidden not to

Dictionary of Australasian Biography, Melbourne, 1892; *Letters from Queensland*, by the *Times* correspondent (Lady Lugard), 1892; "The Australian Democracy," by E. L. Godkin, *Atlantic Monthly*, March 1898; *Educational Systems of the Chief Colonies of the British Empire* (vol. v. of Special Reports of English Board of Education), London, 1901; "Payment of Members," by A. B. Tulloch, *Nineteenth Century*, July 1895; "The Referendum in Australia and New Zealand," by L. Tomm, *Contemporary Review*, August 1897; "Australasia and British Money," by Norwood Young, *Contemporary Review*, February 1894.

In the dearth of political magazines and pamphlets the student of colonial politics must often use the files of the better-known newspapers, laborious as the process is. Of Australian dailies, the *Age* (Melbourne) is Protectionist and Liberal, and the *Argus* Free Trade and Conservative. The *Sydney Morning Herald* (Conservative) and *Daily Telegraph* (Free Trade), the Brisbane *Courier* (Conservative) and the South Australian *Advertiser* (Liberal), are good representative journals. Some of the best writing on the Progressive and Labour side is found in the Sydney *Bulletin; contra* refer to *United Australia* (monthly). The Australasian edition of the *Review of Reviews* publishes special articles, and a monthly summary of public events pleasantly written from a gently Conservative point of view. Some of the many good weeklies are the *Australasian*, the *Sydney Mail*, the *Weekly Press* (N.Z.). In New Zealand there is no overshadowing centre, and therefore no leading newspaper; the *Otago Daily Times* and Wellington *Evening Post* on the more Conservative side, and the *Lyttelton Times* and *Auckland Star* on the Liberal, are among the best dailies.

For official statistics, Mr. T. A. Coghlan of New South Wales has the first place as a general authority. The Victorian Official Year-Book, edited by Mr. Fenton, should also be consulted. The West Australian Government issues a monthly abstract of statistical information. The New Zealand ground is well covered by the Annual Official Year-Book of the Registrar-General.

follow its coasts, but to describe a huge parallelogram on the map, so that his track should enclose the continent. Faithfully executing these orders, he tarried not a moment over any of his discoveries. Though windbound and much in need of water on the New Zealand coast, he did not set foot on shore, but sailed away to hit upon Tonga, regain Java, and report to his masters of the Dutch East India Company. It was lucky that Australia's attractive face is turned eastward and southeastward; that brave Dutch sea-captains of the Tasman stamp had not a gleam of imagination; that the Dutch East India Company and its officials were no colonisers; and that the United Provinces had their hands full elsewhere. Otherwise, in the century and a half before Captain Cook sighted Australia Felix, Holland must have made some use of her opportunity, and England might have found Australian Boers as stubborn opponents as the farmers of the South African Republics.

To explain the low value at which the Dutchmen rated New Holland, it may be pointed out that Australia turns her back on the Old World and her face to the Pacific Ocean; to Asia and to the Indian Ocean she presents aspects which are nearly always unwholesome, or arid and formidable. The shores of the Gulf of Carpentaria are feverish mangrove swamps; on the north-west coast the surf beats, for the most part, upon unapproachable cliffs, or rolls in upon sandy beaches backed by scrub-covered dunes, where thirst, heat, and a torment of flies await the explorer. Even less inviting, were it possible, was the coast of the Great Australian Bight as seen by Van Edels in 1627. The view from his deck showed two long lines of cliffs, nowhere less than 400 feet in height, sometimes rising to 600 feet sheer, and stretching east and west till lost to sight.

For hundreds of miles they continued, dark and weather-worn towards their summit, whitish near the water's edge, and unbroken save by a few ravines nearly always waterless; for that is the part of Australia where, for a thousand miles, no perennial stream of any size flows into the desolate sea.

What kind of a land is the island-continent? Though but newly and partly settled, it is old; though great tracts of it are not beautiful, it is strange; though an island, it is vast; and though travellers have cried out upon the monotony of regions, its provinces differ greatly, so that the contrast between the fertile east and the barren centre, the tropical north and the arid shores of the Great Bight, is complete. To the naturalist, the geologist, and the landscape painter the continent offers as much that is absorbing as it does to the politician, social student, miner, or trader. Every one has read of the atolls, the little annular islands which are specks on the Pacific between Cancer and Capricorn. They are coral rings encircling shallow lagoons, and are often so narrow that, from the deck of a schooner sheltered in the central water, it is possible to see above the cocoa-nut palms the white foam-tops leaping high to windward where the ocean breaks on the outer reef. Here and there, there may be gaps in the coral ring. There is a sense in which habitable Australia may be likened to a gigantic atoll. But its centre is not a lagoon, but a desert, which camels take weeks to cross; and the useful circle round about this, where desert does not reach sea, may vary from forty to four hundred miles in width.

Not nearly so broken or deeply indented as Europe, the continent has not the tame regularity of Africa. Caricaturists see in its form a likeness to the head of an

old man. His face is turned northwards, he wears a skull-cap and a respirator, and his neck is wrapped in a muffler. Cape York stands for his long, thin, pointed nose. Arnhem Land is the respirator, the Kimberley country the chin, and Tasmania the tassel of his cap. Geologists speak of the continent as a plateau mainly of sandstone. As in the centre there are neither high mountains nor the rainfall that mountains ensure, the most valuable, populous, and beautiful territory lies within two hundred miles of the coast. Eastern and south-eastern Australia are marked by a dividing range or high plateau running parallel to the sea-shore for more than two thousand miles, and usually from thirty to fifty miles inland. On the outer edge, where it breaks down steeply, it often shows a boldly picturesque rampart; on the inner it sinks, sometimes almost imperceptibly, into wide-stretching billowy plains, which, before they fade into desert, supply the enterprise of the owner of flocks and herds with one of the world's famous pastoral tracts. In the extreme south-east corner, where New South Wales and Victoria meet, the dividing range surges up into true mountains upon whose peaks and ridges snow lies deep, and from which swift, ice-cold rivers flow, summer and winter, inland and to the sea. Here Kosciusko, with its 7000 feet, is worthy of the name of Alp; the altitudes of Bogong and Feathertop, and of half-a-dozen other summits, are but a few hundred feet less; and the town of Kiandra, more than four thousand feet above sea-level, enjoys a climate which meteorologists are pleased to liken to that of Edinburgh. Australia is vast enough to have in it ample room at the same time for rain and aridity, riches and sterility, beauty and desolation. The territorial scale is so large that the same province will

contain wide tracts utterly unlike each other. The well-watered part of New South Wales is as large as France; and yet there is within the colony's boundaries a western region oppressed with drought, and almost as large as Italy. Eastward, along the littoral, the tourist in the comfortable, well-watered dairy country round Kiama may think of Arcadia as he watches the cows standing knee-deep in grass by brown, gently-flowing streams. In the Illawarra glens, south of Sydney, tall palm trees mingle with the eucalypts, ferns and creepers enrich plant life, and the ravines are choked with a luxuriant jungle. In the Queensland valleys, as might be expected, bamboos, the cane brake, orchids, and parasitic climbers of every sort and size fill the forests where the alluvium is deep—forests which by an odd perversion of language are there termed "scrubs," the ugly name elsewhere conferred more fitly upon under-sized timber and scant-leaved brushwood. So dense are the tropical growths which clothe the coast-ranges of Northern Queensland, that the botanist or prospector who would penetrate the wilder regions is fain to stumble and splash along amongst the water-worn boulders of the gorges. The brawling of the torrent that forms his pathway, blended, perhaps, with the roar of some waterfall, combines with the vivid green of the sunlit foliage and richness of the moist undergrowth to upset his preconceived notions of Australian scenery, and to impress him with a sense of colour and moisture, sap and abundance.

Goldsmith's couplet—

> Those matted woods where birds forget to sing,
> But silent bats in drowsy clusters cling

—might serve for these northern jungles when the noon-day heat lays its heavy hand upon them. The slender

New Guinea palm adds a grace there. But the charm of the great black-stemmed fern-trees is not confined to the far north. They are found all down the Dividing Range and hills of the coast as far south as Cape Otway, in Victoria. It is the valleys of the Dividing Range, too, that provide the tall hardwood trees for which Australia has a name in commerce. One specimen of these giants, a red gum, found prostrate in Victoria, measured 425 feet.

This range or plateau, with its bottle-shaped, sometimes inaccessible valleys, its gigantic rocks and stupendous cliffs, precious waterfalls and crystalline caves, contains much of the most characteristic scenery of the continent. To the first settlers on the coast of New South Wales the Blue Mountains, as they called the plateau, were baffling barriers for many years. Their ridges lie nearly forty miles inland, and, as you approach them, look like an endless blue wall, slightly irregular and wave-like along the top. In this they do not differ greatly from other mountain ranges, when seen far off. But seen nearer, they do not, like other mountain ranges, cast off their shroud of haze and break up into peaks, gorges, cones, and spurs. They remain a wall, a rampart, and for the best possible reason, because this is exactly what they are. They form a gigantic wall of sandstone, rising abruptly to shut off the coast district from the plains of the interior. For five-and-twenty years after the landing of Captain Phillip, this barrier did its work, for it is a wall scores of miles wide at the top, and the explorer's work was only beginning when he surmounted the eastern side. Mile after mile of dry ridges lay before him, covered with white gum and its kindred trees, littered with fallen bark, and yielding little or no grass, but chiefly scrub and wild-flowers,

and between these ridges yawned chasms, tremendous gulfs, such as the earth seldom shows. What wonder if surveyors again and again turned back, reporting in despair "No road"; if criminals escaped to these recesses only to wander and perish miserably; and if pioneer settlers, however enterprising, gave up the passage as hopeless. It needed the compulsion of an Australian drought to overcome such an obstacle. In 1813 it seemed—as at moments it does in Australia—that the sheep-farmers' was a hopeless trade. Rainless months followed one another, streams dried up, and pools became staring pans of clay; the grass withered, and in spots utterly disappeared; leaves hung from the trees with that weary, listless look which belongs to Australian foliage, when the long struggle with heat and thirst grows too severe; dark clouds were borne along by the wind, but either passed relentlessly overhead or proved to be the heralds of tormenting dust-storms. The anxious colonist looked westward at the high wall of the Blue Mountains. Perhaps amidst or beyond those heights lay a better land, where grass and water might be found. In the crisis of 1813 three young men—Blaxland, Wentworth, and Lawson—found a practicable way across the barrier. On the map the route of Wentworth and his companions looks but a petty journey, when contrasted with the long lines drawn across the continent by later and more famous explorers. But it was their achievement which opened the gate: they made Greater Australia possible. Wentworth will always be remembered as one of the chief agitators in later days for self-government in New South Wales. There are some to whom his best title to fame seems that brave scramble across the Blue Mountains in 1813.

On the Range the air is not only healthy, but,

throughout most of the year, agreeable. Even at Toowoomba, in South Queensland, where you begin to approach the south tropic, immigrants, though reared in cool climates, flourish and are strong, and out-door labour goes on indifferent to the sun even in mid-summer. The Darling Downs are not only a good land for farmer and grazier, but a sanatorium for Anglo-Saxons with delicate lungs.

Unhappily in Northern Australia, where height is most of all desirable, the coast-lands rise into downs not high enough to improve the climate, or at best are backed by hills of 1000 to 1500 feet. On the west coast the conditions are much the same, and though the rainfall in the triangle, of which Cape Leeuwin is the apex, is a good thirty inches a year, it grows scanty all too soon as you journey towards the immense and torrid interior. Along the Great Bight you may pass from the centre to the sea meeting neither hills nor low coast-land—only a terrace ending in the unbroken sea-wall. In winter the terrace is covered with pasture for hundreds of miles, in summer it is a parched desert without lake or stream. At its eastern end come the scorched Nullarbor Plains, well named, for they are utterly treeless.

In Victoria, the bracing and agreeable districts are not confined to the Dividing Range and its slopes; they include all the southern half of the colony as well. There are few more favoured corners in the Empire than this southern half of Australia Felix. More beautiful there may be, though many tracts there are beautiful. But for a better blending of the useful with the attractive the traveller will have to go far indeed. For a hundred miles due north of Melbourne, and for much more than that west, north-east, and south-east, the

country is wholesome, genial, and fertile. It welcomes the colonist with open arms. The Dividing Range, north of Port Phillip, offers no such impracticable barrier as that which Wentworth and his Sydney friends had to scale. Nor is the higher country useless. Even in the mountainous labyrinth of the Bogong, grassy plains are found lying between four and six thousand feet above the sea. Along the Upper Loddon many of the plateaux are fertile; you scale cliffs to find flat stretches of soil lying above. Writers, in haste to make "copy" out of the grotesqueness and grimness of the stranger and more arid territories of the continent, have hardly given its due to the quality of Victorian scenery. Ferny glens, wooded valleys, rolling grassy downs sprinkled with sheep, park-like expanses dotted with cattle—such things may be seen in other continents. The wanderer who has read Marcus Clarke's well-known bit of word-painting on the Australian landscapes, and is in haste to experience the sensations of loneliness, melancholy, and terror which strangers who accept Clarke's highly-charged picture without reserve thenceforth couple with the word Australia, thinks Victoria disappointingly pleasant, kindly, and comfortable. The wilder parts of the province—the Cape Otway range, with its deep ravines and groves of tall tree-ferns, the Gippland forests and cold mountain streams, the intricate ranges of the Alpine east—the average tourist does not visit. It is possible, even, that he will not turn aside to see the western district, as charming now as when Mitchell discovered it and went into raptures over its pastures and sweet waters. He admires the cornfields, orchards, vineyards, and pastures of the district which slopes towards Port Phillip, but it may be questioned whether he rates the land at its proper

worth. Perhaps it takes a colonist—one who has seen young countries, and had a hand in the work of settlement—fully to appreciate Victoria; to understand how soil and climate alike invite the working settler, and what are the possibilities of the broad expanse of which Melbourne is the natural as well as the political centre; to understand, moreover, that even the most easily accessible parts of this favoured land are not yet half populated.

Any one passing from the east to Australia across the Blue Mountains, and seeing on the west of the watershed the country declining and the streams flowing towards the interior, is tempted to think of the passage of the Alleghanies in North America, and the descent into the magnificent valley of the Mississippi. A much closer likeness may be found in South Africa, on the journey from Natal to the Boer Provinces. There the wayfarer, leaving the well-watered Garden Colony, with its soft sea winds, climbs through the passes of the Drakensberg to the sun-smitten pastoral veldt, with its dry stinging air and flat-topped kopjes. He sees the rivers flowing westward to be gathered into the volume of the Orange, which runs in its lower course, useless and solitary, through the sterile deserts of Namaqualand, the only veldt river to reach the Atlantic. West of the useful veldt of the Free State and Transvaal are the scrubs of the Kalihari wilderness, where, if man would find water, he must dig for it underground. In Bechuanaland the rivers—torrents in the wet season—are dry half the year, or the water collects in shallow lakes and dries up in salt-pans. All these features are met with in passing from Eastern into Central and West Central Australia. But the scale is vaster. The fertile East is far richer, broader, and healthier than any

country in South Africa. In the West Central the landscape is more bizarre, the solitudes wider. Speaking broadly, arid Australia stretches from the Great Bight to the 20th parallel of south latitude, and spreads across from Shark's Bay, on the coast of West Australia, to the lower course of the Paroo River in New South Wales. It takes in the south-west angle of Queensland and a broad strip along the western frontier of New South Wales; it even cuts off a large corner of happy Victoria. The dreary scrubs which envelop the Murray during the last part of its long journey to the sea, belong to the desert, which there thrusts down an arm pretty nearly to the ocean, between the mouth of the brave river and the fertile volcanic corner of South Australia, called the Mount Gambier district. In the better parts of the arid expanse the mean rainfall is below ten inches; in the worse it is below five, and there are years in which no rain falls whatever. Of all the many rivers which flow west from the Dividing Range of the east, or south from the downs and hills of the north, only one ever reaches the sea. The waters of some are sucked up by the sun's rays and absorbed by the thirsty sands; others, like the Barcoo and Sturt's Creek, make an end in gloomy salt lakes—broad shallow expanses, brackish after rain, bitter or half-dry in seasons of drought. In such seasons the Darling ceases to be navigable, and in places for scores of miles its stream becomes too salt to drink. In the deserts some streams are salt entirely, and when they dry up in summer their white staring beds wind like huge serpents through the landscape. Other desert rivers are without water more often than not. When some rare rain-storm floods them they cover the neighbouring country, and rush along bearing in their torrents logs, trees, and the

rubbish accumulated during many months of drought. Only the Murray, reinforced by the Murrumbidgee, holds out through the long journey, and, swerving sharply southward, makes a troubled exit to the sea. Both rivers are snow-fed ; and as late as hot December their united volume streaming into South Australia, swollen by the melting snows, rises and spreads over the country nigh to the river's banks for miles. From the deck of a river steamer the passenger may watch the brownish flood flowing through the half-submerged forest. Far as the eye can see, the eucalypts stand waist-deep, their drooping leaves and grotesquely irregular branches reflected clearly in the water. Long forest aisles are water-paved like Venetian canals, and the glades seem lagoons girt with green. All looks cool, clean, and refreshing, and the quiet is only broken by the throb of the steamer's engine. Perhaps a flock of white parrots may fly chattering across the tree-tops, and once in a day, maybe, a brown or yellow snake be seen wriggling across stream, swimming well. Sometimes the water washes a sand-coloured cliff, touched here and there with green, and lifting a sparely-timbered crest. The stream is powerful ; let some accident happen to the steamer's engine, and in a minute she will be swept against a tree. A crashing of splintered boughs will be heard, and she will hang there athwart the trunk, while bark and leaves rain on to the deck. Normally she breasts the strong river steadily, and the passenger finds it hard to remember that he is far from the sea, in a continent where at the moment whole territories are being parched by thirst and peppered by dust-storms, away northward in the terrible interior.

Some of the thirstiest of the thirsty tracts are in the *hinterland* of West Australia. There, as Mr. David

Carnegie, the latest and least inarticulate of their explorers, has noted, three deserts succeed one another on the way from south to north. In the south comes that named Victoria, first traversed by Giles, whose party spent week after week boring through waterless scrubs just high enough to spoil the view, and dense enough to obstruct the riders without shading them from the sun. Next lies Gibson's desert, named after an unfortunate follower of the same explorer who was lost there through disobeying instructions. It is almost bare, a dismal expanse of sun-heated stones. North of the tropic of Capricorn is the Great Sandy Desert, where sand-hills succeed sand-hills—here, little drifted heaps hardly as high as a man; there, sloping ridges, dark-red in colour and as lofty as the ocean billows in a Cape Horn gale. The flats between these sand-hills are but a few hundred yards across, and nothing thrives there but thorns.

The Central Desert—that which occupies the centre of the inaptly-named province of South Australia—is in many parts a less horrible region. It was here that imaginative geographers once located an inland sea; it was here that up to comparatively recent years sweet lakes, tree-clad mountains, and well-grassed plains were hoped for by the sanguine. All such dreams have now proved vain. The inland sea has dwindled to shallow salt lakes, the mountain forests to a few eucalypts sheltered in the deep ravines of the Macdonnell and James ranges. Few are the oases found within the forbidding embrace of the stern wilderness. From the salt lakes of the south to the dry steppes of the north, the curse of aridity is but seldom lifted. Yet there are degrees of desolation in parched countries, and the east and north of the central plateau are less hopeless and

more interesting than the waterless western realm of rolling sand-hills, where no wise explorer will venture without camels, black trackers, and an ample supply of water.

The Central Desert rises imperceptibly from its southern limit at Lake Eyre, which lies below the ocean level—the Dead Sea of Australia. On the Tropic of Capricorn, across the middle of the immense waste, the steep rocks of the Macdonnell ranges stand up as high as 5000 feet, divided by sandy valleys like the gorges of Nubia. In their loose drifts burrows the marsupial mole, a creature found nowhere else, and in the deepest clefts among the red rocks water lies all the year round in dark pools screened by cliffs from the sun's rays. To the north of the mountains stretch hard steppes, in parts of which man can just live. The sun scorches them by day, and the frost—despite the latitude—nips by night, so rapid is the radiation under the cloudless skies. Where there is vegetation it is porcupine grass, the leaves of which have been likened to "knitting-needles radiating from a huge pin-cushion," thorny shrubs, monotonous scrubs, and by each scattered waterhole a straggling company of exhausted-looking eucalypts. Away from the little oases such grass as there is grows in wiry tufts, far apart on the staring clay; a persevering man could count the number of tussocks in an acre. Wide expanses, the "gibber" plains, are entirely bare; brown and purple stones extend farther than the eye can reach. The heat in summer is that of the Sahara. When it is at its worst the lead drops out of the explorer's cedar pencils; the ink dries on his pen ere he can write; his candles have to be buried in the earth to save them from melting, and his hair and finger-nails cease to grow. Yet as

rain does at times fall there, even in torrents, plants which can grow apace, roots which can conserve moisture, and animals which can burrow and travel fast or far for water or pasture, are to be found on the steppes. And with them man has developed along the lines enforced by these surroundings. The black who still roams over the desert (he is chocolate brown in colour under his coating of grease and red ochre) is slim, well-made, and wiry. Of average height, always in hard training, his carriage is easy and erect. Broken up into small local groups, the tribes are as sparsely scattered as the vegetation, and as ready to roam as the animals. Life is one eternal search for food, and for the irreducible minimum of water. They are not tillers of the soil like the Polynesians, though their women turn the earth up by the acre with digging-sticks for roots, grubs, or honey ants, and gather acacia seeds and wild plums. They are hunters and nothing else. So they diminish. To find them now in any numbers, one must go well into the tropical north, where naturalists like Carl Lumholz have dwelt amongst and studied them. Of the 50,000 blacks supposed still to exist, four-fifths probably live north of the Tropic of Capricorn. In Victoria they are almost extinct, and in New South Wales and South Australia proper they number but a few thousands, and are quietly dwindling away.

The vastness of that moiety of the continent which may be termed arid Australia may be emphasised by a description of the two extensive oases which it envelops and cuts off from the well-watered east. Oases I will call them, for they lie surrounded by the lonely desert and the ocean almost as lonely, yet they are provinces, each large enough to form a respectable little kingdom in Europe. Moreover, in the north-west of

West Australia is a third tract, not indeed to be classed with the two just named, but still of value. This is a pastoral district, the coastal and worst lands of which screen a more attractive interior of broken, fairly well-watered country, with much good grass and some rich alluvial valleys. Despite its isolation and a trying climate, those who know it speak well of this region.

From Geraldton, on the west coast, to and round Cape Leeuwin at the extreme south-west, and thence eastward some way beyond Albany, extends the oasis of Perth, with a coast-line of fifteen hundred miles, an average width of two hundred and fifty, a good rainfall, and a climate which, thanks to sea-breezes, is fairly pleasant and very healthy. A sandy strip along the coast is more remarkable for the unprofitable beauty of its wild-flowers than for usefulness. But a little way inland there is a sandstone plateau about a thousand feet high, which, in days to come, should be well peopled by graziers and cultivators. Its soil has been called sand, but it is sand that will grow anything if you give it water. "You cannot eat gold!" said Sir John Forrest to the West Australians. And since the land will remain when giant trees, pearl-shell fisheries, and even quartz-reefs, have been worked out, one may be permitted to sympathise with the efforts of the Forrest Ministry to encourage agriculture—efforts one of which will be sketched in a later chapter.

The other oasis, the Adelaide Province, is the better of the two—is so good, indeed, that its chief fault is that there is not more of it. Yet it is no puny territory. From Encounter Bay, into which the Murray struggles, it goes northward for five hundred miles, corresponding more or less with the Mount Lofty and Flinders ranges, and with the plains lying between them

and the sea. Yorke Peninsula is part of it, and its ports are on the Gulfs of Spencer and St. Vincent. As is often the case in Australia, the hills of the province are seldom peaked or fantastic in shape, and are seldom too rugged and impracticable for settlement. From the plains at their feet they look wall-like, with an occasional knob rising several hundred feet above their general level. Amongst the southern ranges, the highest, the Razorback, reaches 2834 feet. Further north, in the Flinders chain, Mount Remarkable is 3000 feet high. When once their sides have been ascended their ridges stretch away in front of the traveller in easy undulations, and dip down into shallow valleys, spots for the homestead of the fruit-grower and peasant farmer. Amongst all but the northern hills the sight and sound of running water, overhung in spots by ferns and the quaint grass-trees, meet eye and ear. The park-like woods are not dense enough to break the settler's heart as he labours to clear them. There are grassy table-lands where the eucalypts stand singly or in clumps, so well dispersed that nature would seem to have made up her mind to show how easily she can outdo the human landscape gardener. There the rainfall seldom fails—more often it is ample ; and in the hottest weeks of summer the lowlanders escaping from the burnt-up plains may reckon upon cool nights and fresh mornings while they make holiday among the Adelaide hills. On the sides of these and in their valleys are grown the cherries, peaches, apples, pears, nectarines, and apricots which fill the fruit-shops of the province, and help to make the hot season endurable. So clear is the morning air on the heights, that from certain of the hilltops it is possible to see Kangaroo Island, rising faint as a mirage out of the ocean, ninety miles away. The wine

of the hills is lighter and less potent than that from the vineyards of the plains. Already the plentiful water supply of the uplands is being stored for use in the cities and gardens of the low country. In the Happy Valley—fitly named—a huge dam of masonry turns half the broad, dish-shaped vale into a lake. By the western flanks of the hills stretches a long plain by the sea, where a rich chocolate-coloured soil awaits systematic irrigation. In the plain, not far from the blue gulf, is Adelaide—the White City—girt with gardens and belted with parks.

Nature delights in contrast; so she has placed Tasmania in the same quarter of the globe as Central and Western Australia. Anything more unlike them than the broken, high-lying, pleasantly-watered island it would be hard to picture. Australians, in genially patronising mood, are wont to say that Providence designed Tasmania in the right way and placed it on the right spot—two hundred miles south of their continent—to furnish them with an ideal summer resort. Some have even compared it to a heart-shaped pendent trinket hanging on to Australia by the chain of islands in Bass's Straits. Tasmania, however, is no toy islet. It is a valuable colony not much smaller than Scotland, and, like Scotland, a land of cliff and mountain, lake and forest, with precipitous coasts and peaks that rival the Grampians in height. There the resemblance ends, for its latitude is Italian and its climate more resembles that of Brittany. Certainly it is sometimes pleasant to leave behind the continental midsummer and to find in Tasmania grassy valleys, fruit orchards, fields bordered with hedgerows, haunts of shade and comfort. On a central plateau lies the Great Lake — rightly

named, for it covers 28,000 acres. It is but one of many, though the largest. In the Huon pine woods and other forests the Australian flora changes under cooler and moister skies, the fallen logs are clothed with green mosses, the tree-trunks draped with creepers, and ferns as large as trees or as tiny as the maidenhair contrast with blue-gums from one hundred to three hundred feet high. All that is useful in the English flora will grow, and most of it does grow, in Tasmania. From the orchards fruit is sent to Africa, Australia, and New Zealand, and Tasmanian apples are a familiar sight on the street barrows in London.

The Tasmanians are the most sober and best conducted of colonists. Why then is it that after a hundred years the colony is the least energetic and populous of the seven? The miserable convict system held it back for fifty years. Then the goldfields, the broader arable lands, the manufactures, larger spheres, and more active city life of Victoria and New South Wales have competed severely with the quieter island. Few immigrants have come thither, three-fourths of those now living in it have been born there, and some even of its native-born have been from time to time drawn away. This process began as far back as the years of the Californian gold discoveries. Lately it has been checked, for Tasmania has now her own mines, and produces much tin. The Mount Lyell and Bischoff mines have achieved fame. The chief reason of the colony's slow progress is explained by a glance at its physical geography. An island which can show a hundred peaks rising over three thousand feet above the sea-level, is more likely to be romantic than to rejoice in a fat soil. It is said that you cannot go over two hundred acres without finding three different

qualities of land. It is certain that Tasmania is patchy, and that short-sighted Governors carelessly granted away large blocks of the best land in early days. In this way one company got 350,000 acres. There is indeed a fair amount of rich alluvium, but much of it is covered by tall forest, shut in by hills. Gradually settlement is winning its way, and the small farmers who tackle the task of clearing the bush-valleys are sterling men. Still, much the larger portion of the island's surface lies in the hands of the Crown—waste and useless land.

A long, lofty, riband-like land, wind-swept, set far in the ocean, and itself cut asunder by straits into three mountainous islands, with many varieties of surface and climate—such is the archipelago clumsily called New Zealand. It has the comical riding-boot shape of Italy, but with the toe pointing northward. As a theatre for our race its special advantages are climate, beauty of scenery, water-power, and mineral wealth. About half its soil is really fertile, and all but about one-sixth of the surface is, or may be made, fairly good pasture. Its chief drawback is remoteness. Its bold coasts rise out of one of the lonely stretches of the South Pacific. Australia is 1200 miles away to the north-west; southward there are but storm-beaten islets, visited by seals and sea-fowl, until you sight the ice-blink of the Antarctic. To the north the coral islands are beyond Capricorn; and eastward comes the emptiest expanse of all, the 4000 miles of unbroken sea, across which the English merchant-ships, with the eternal westerly gales behind them, run for Cape Horn. As might be expected, an archipelago so isolated has a character of its own. It is as unlike Australia as it is unlike the

Zealand after which Tasman named it. Nor, to speak truth, does it much resemble the motherland, to which—so its colonists fondly think—it bears a greater likeness than do any of Britain's other daughters. The difference from Australia is extraordinary. New Zealand's distinctive qualities are variety and romance, just as those of Australia are strangeness and a brooding sense of the vast and half-known. The wearisome continental distances, the flattish-topped hills, the brown or tawny sandstone rock, so ready to break through the earth's skin, the large, open, dish-shaped flats encircled by bush, are not reproduced in the islands. Nor are the wide, rolling downs with easy sweeps and straggling trees, nor the yellow-grey plains with their dust, drought, and thunderstorms. The sparse forests, the eucalypts, acacias, and ground-flowers, and, most distinctively Australian of all, the monotonous "scrubs"—all are left behind. In fauna and flora, as in outlines, the Commonwealth has nothing in common with the colony. In climate the change is as from Algiers to Western France.

From the hilltops of most New Zealand districts at least a glimpse of the sea can be caught, and most New Zealanders sleep within sound of the surf. The salt water, which twice divides their country, nearly severs it a third time. Deep bays and hilly peninsulas break the coast-line; narrow fiords penetrate the land, and wander tortuously among mountains and precipices.

> And lo! amid a wilderness of stone
> The sea had got entangled in the land,
> And turned and twisted, struggling to get free
> And be once more the immeasurable sea.

The Sounds of the south-west recall Norway. But, instead of the sombre suggestions of the Scandinavian

background, where Nature seems to whisper that winter will return in a moment, the rich green of their dripping thickets, mossy tree-trunks, and masses of ferns and leaves clothing cliff and ravine, tell of a climate where frost hardly approaches the sea-shore. The luxuriant vegetation has to be paid for: the rainfall of the Sounds is 150 inches a year. And, as the physical features of this south-west verge are the precipitous varied by the perpendicular, it is never likely to be peopled. So its scenery may survive unscathed, and escape the fate which has befallen millions of acres of noble forest in drier and less broken parts of the islands.

And if salt water, as I have said, is seldom far away in New Zealand, fresh water is always at hand. Almost everywhere water is somewhere in the foreground, as snow, clearly or faintly seen, is usually in the far background of the landscape. The rivers, except the largest, the Waikato, have the swiftness and fickleness of mountain torrents; yet very few of them ever run dry. Next to the pine odours among the forest evergreens, the most characteristic country scents of the islands are those of the flax-plants, reeds, bulrushes, and sharp-bladed grasses which haunt damp spots, the banks of streams, and the fringes of the many swamps. Another familiar rural smell is that of wood-fires. The river Wanganui, absurdly called the New Zealand Rhine — you might as well liken the Wye to the Hudson! — is justly famous for the height and rich foliage of its cliffs. Many lakes in the Alps are beautiful, though not with a beauty equal to that of the Sounds. In comparison with Switzerland it would be fair to say that the finer of them excel Brien and Thun, but do not come up to Lucerne or the eastern horn of Leman. Perhaps to mountaineers the glaciers are the

most interesting feature of the Southern Alps. To artists their peculiar charm is the combination of wildness and softness, colour and grandeur, on the forest-clad western slopes and shores, where tree-ferns grow beside moraines, and waterfalls plunge into peaceful arms of the sea.

The distinctive attraction of New Zealand scenery—and the land is the most beautiful in the south temperate zone—is not derived from surpassing loveliness in any one feature, so much as from the number and striking variety of the kinds of scenery seen in rapid succession within an area less than that of the British Islands. I cannot assert that, apart from the Sounds, any of its coast scenes match the Straits of Messina on a calm and brilliant day, that it has any range finer than the Bernese Alps, a pinnacle rivalling Adam's Peak, or a lake quite as lovely as Lucerne. Even the volcanic plateau, uncommon as it is, lacks the architecture and urban colour which complete Auvergne. The Southern Alps, however, equal the Pyrenees, and even on their eastern and inferior side I have seen more than one panorama comparable with the great spectacle which you behold as you go up from Allessandria to Turin in clear, cold weather, and see Monte Viso, and the sweeping crescent of Alps to the west, sheeted with snow. If the volcanic district wants something that Auvergne has, it has one interest which Auvergne has lost—it is active. There are no geysers in Auvergne, and no sight in volcanic France at all like the steaming pyramid of Nganruhoe, where, belted with cloud and streaked with snow, it towers thousands of feet over the pumice-strewn plain, which is the one bit of true desert in the colony.

The long dorsal ranges, which run from the butt-end

of the South Island to the Bay of Plenty in the north, determine the climate, flora, and aspect of the islands. On their eastern side the air is clear, rather dry, and in winter keen; all the year round there is abundant sunshine; not much forest is found; the hills and plains, until the settlers got to work on them, were covered with coarse tussock grass and bracken. Westwards, however, the clouds brought by the rain-winds blowing from south-west and north-west, burst on the mountains and fall sometimes in a deluge. So the western air is moister and softer and the skies dimmer than on the east coast. From end to end of the islands a forest once stretched along the western shores, and in the South Island it still for the most part stands. But in the North most of the forest tract has been cleared for dairy and other farms, and there the thick woods, with their gloriously luxuriant undergrowth, are fast disappearing. Just as the wind is the most disagreeable thing in New Zealand, so the destruction of the native "bush" is the most melancholy. For it is like no other forest. The English woods surpass it with their clouds of fresh and tender green for a few weeks in May and June, but neither in New Zealand nor Australia is there any season of splendour to be named with the "fall" in New England. But for a charm lasting through the year, for a union of grace, stateliness, and profusion of form and growth, the New Zealand jungles are the peculiar and crowning beauty of their country. Yet the axemen destroy them year by year; already a third of the forest is gone; and when cut down and burned it never grows again.

On the other hand, the progress of settlement in the treeless districts is a cheerful sight. There was nothing for the most rampant Anglo-Saxon to destroy there—

no beasts, no trees or flowers, hardly any natives. Most of the few birds are preserved for game. The settler brings animals, plants, and trees. The winds almost force him to have hedgerows and plantations; so plains and valleys which forty years ago were dreary and unsheltered are now studded with trees, and are beginning to take on something of the look of Wiltshire or Hampshire, albeit some mountain range always closes in the scene. Wherever New Zealand is at all closely occupied the change is far completer than in Australia. In the forest tracts the native flora is almost utterly swept away; in the grassy districts there was little to fill the eye. In both, the rainier, colder climate allows English plant-life, from oaks down to clover, free play, and the transformation wrought in a single generation is often striking.

To give a rapid, life-like sketch of a colony does not seem easy to a colonist. He may know it and its affairs well, may have watched and studied them, but he finds it hard to look at them as from the outside, and sketch general impressions. He is tempted to take externals for granted, plunge into details and flounder amid qualifications. Perhaps this is one of the reasons why a good deal of honest writing still leaves the average European notions of the seven colonies open to improvement. Certain it is that few in older countries who have not seen the colonies seem to form even fairly correct ideas of them. This is so even when, as occasionally happens, they are at some pains to try. Australia is so unlike Europe. In an earlier page I have compared it with Africa south of the Zambezi. In some ways it might be likened to the great bulbous mass of Africa north of the Guinea Coast and the Great Lakes. We

should have to imagine a tropical sea washing a mangrove-lined shore, stretching from the Bight of Benin to Abyssinia. Given that, North Africa shows the broader Australian features, the same central desert, the same fringe of settlement on a temperate coast, the same belt of tropical country on the desert's equatorial side. The hopeless interior, however, is smaller in Australia, the fertile or improvable rind is relatively larger; some of the coast is cooler than any part of Africa; the tropical littoral is less malarious. Yet if, on the whole, Australia is the more manageable continent of the two, that is mainly because it is empty and lying ready for the White Man with his energy, his discontent, and his science. The emptiness differentiates it from Europe as much as do climate and aspect. Conceive Europe with one city of half a million inhabitants where Genoa is, another about as large on the site of Lisbon, and two much smaller near the positions of Hamburg and Constantinople. Put a couple of respectable towns, neither of them as large as Oxford, in France, a third in Spain, and a fourth in Denmark. That disposes of a third of the population. Strew most of the rest—less than two and a half millions—along the western and southern coasts. Place a mining centre near the Sea of Asov and a second in Poland, both surrounded by a sandy wilderness; and let Russia and Scandinavia be unpeopled wastes, and Germany and Austria given over to a sparse pastoral occupation. Such would be Europe if settled as Australia is settled, for the continent has not two human beings to each square mile. Some three million six hundred thousands souls inhabit it, and of these one million and a quarter are gathered in four cities.

As for Tasmania and New Zealand, it should be enough to mention that between them they are larger

than the British Islands, yet have but a little more than 1,000,000 inhabitants. Auckland, the largest town in either, is about as populous as Coventry. Modest as these figures are, one quality may be noted in the people of the seven colonies. Nineteen-twentieths of them are Whites.

English people usually think of colonists, when they think of them at all, as rough, bronzed, bearded, clad in riding breeches, flannel shirts, and wide-awake hats, following sheep and cattle in the wilderness, or, rifle in hand, defying brown or black savages. The Englishman who reaches the Antipodes, when at the first seaport he finds himself confronted with an English provincial town—*minus* age, slums, and fog—is likely for a while to think colonies as much too British, as at home he thought them too primitive. There is little to undeceive him in his first glance at streets which are as English as British architecture of the modern, commercial, and Philistine order can make them ; where the dress of the passers-by is English—of the provinces ; and where the very policemen have the solid, stolid, not unfriendly air which is so unlike the half-military, half-detective look of the gendarme. The hotels, with one or two exceptions, are more British than American, and the cookery—yes, the cookery is distinctly what might be looked for among the children of John Bull. Then, except in Queensland, the pleasant gardens and orchards of suburbs show more points of likeness than of unlikeness to those of the motherland ; at any rate, only a gardener or botanist will, at first sight, note the presence of a strange flora mingling with the good old flowers and trees. House interiors strengthen the impression. The furniture is familiar, the books and magazines are just those which sleep on London shelves or lie about

on London tables. At a formal dinner-party the guests come in evening dress, and the men sit over their wine —which, even in Australia, is probably port, claret, or champagne—after the ladies have withdrawn to the drawing-room. Should the talk, out of compliment to the English visitor, turn upon British or Imperial topics, the new-comer will note a tone of Anglo-Saxon patriotism of a very robust order indeed.

Big factories, where the labour of women and children is systematically employed, and where the men are trade unionists well organised; banks, with financial operations which run into millions, and where the traveller's letter of credit may be cashed in British sovereigns; State primary schools which might be board-schools carried bodily across the ocean, and where the lesson-books are, possibly, those published by Longman, Macmillan, or Nelson;—these and twenty other features at once remind the traveller of home, and teach him that he is in a civilised community with a complex life. Nor, outside the towns, is there much to surprise him as he begins his journey through the older-settled farming country. Presently, however, he may note vineyards or orange-groves, or even cane-fields, in Australia, where, moreover, he cannot move without seeing and smelling the ever-present eucalyptus. In New Zealand the background of every landscape is un-English, though the foreground, especially in the grassy provinces, where there was no native forest to be cleared away, and where the trees are exotics planted by the settlers, is often curiously like bits of the southern counties. But when the visitor moves out from town and suburb, and from the few picked districts where the wilderness has been fairly tamed, the meaning of pastoral settlement soon dawns upon him. He has

perhaps heard that the greater part of Australia and more than a third of New Zealand are not yet used for any industrial purpose. They are lying just as they were when the first explorers traversed them. For this, perhaps, the traveller is prepared. But he has been told that there are in the interior great mines and vast and valuable territories given up to grazing, and he associates mining and grazing with the presence of man. There are ninety million sheep and ten million cattle in the seven colonies, despite recent droughts so terrible that the flocks have decreased thirty-six millions in ten years, and a single run-holder has been known to lose eighty thousand sheep. But mines and miners are small, and rare dots in the waste; and in the purely pastoral tracts the chief impression is how little nature has been disturbed. A few beasts grazing or making off amongst trees or brush, a cluster of neutral-tinted dots on a grey plain or yellow hillside, indicate that the country is tenanted by cattle or sheep. Now and then a wire fence and wooden gateway denote subdivision or a boundary line between Run number * and Run number *. Here may be seen a shepherd's hut, there the kennel of some "boundary dog"; at great intervals a homestead appears with wool-shed and out-buildings. In New Zealand, except in the mountains, pumice plains, or certain untouched stretches of forest, settlement is closer. But in the Australian interior the distances are continental. The straggling little townships lie so far apart, and seem so absurdly small amid the expanses, man is so much rarer than sheep, that the least observant stranger understands that rural life in the colonies is still removed by a long interval from anything to be seen in Western Europe, unless it be in a few parts of Spain. Even among the farms (as

distinguished from the "runs"), where holdings are much smaller, and there are homes with women and children about them, each home stands by itself. The farm people never dwell together in villages, from which they go out at morning to work in the fields, returning again at dusk. The villages of Europe, noisy and picturesque at dawn and evening, silent and half-deserted during the long day, have never been reproduced in the colonies. There the land has been settled on strictly individualist lines; the attempts to foster co-operative settlement have all failed.

The result is that in the country colonists still live much apart, and many, though not all of them, lead at times lonely lives. The solitude is not utter, but they see few faces, and each man usually passes several hours of the day riding, walking, or working alone. Hence the endurance, self-reliance, and economy of speech which are characteristics of the bushmen. Yet their quiet, semi-solitary lives, passed for the most part amid immense half-occupied spaces, are not monotonous in the sense in which many an English farm-labourer's life is. The country people in the colonies move about; most of the workmen are real nomads. I do not mean only the classes whose work keeps them always moving—the drovers, mail-carriers, hawkers, waggoners—who seldom pass two consecutive nights on the same spot. There is a class of gold-seekers who, though far fewer now than when the alluvial fields were richer, still roam about "prospecting" amongst quartz-reefs or searching for small deposits of wash-dirt. The harvesters, too, in most farming districts are not resident labourers, but come along at harvest-time as Irishmen cross to England, or London hop-pickers go down to the fields of Kent. The axemen employed in

bush-felling usually go in small parties, take contracts to clear patches of forest, and when their work is done pass on to another scene. The shearers, of whom I shall say something later on, are the most persistent wanderers of all, for many of them will journey not merely from district to district, but from colony to colony as the year goes round. Artisans and general labourers seem to share in the readiness to shift their ground. Even farmers sometimes display it, and are prompt to sell out, either because they are not successful or because they are. Perhaps the great gold discoveries of the fifties were the origin of this unrest in a race in whose veins the blood of gold-seekers and speculators runs. At any moment a gold-fever may still break out amongst colonists—witness the rush of Australians and New Zealanders to Western Australia in the years after 1893. Hard as all work—and there is no leisured class in the colonies—there is a certain restlessness and proneness to speculation which cannot be all due to heredity. In truth, the producers' lives are exposed to uncertainties. On the fluctuations of mining I need not dwell. But wool-growing, the staple industry, has its risks. In 1878 the fifty-nine million pounds of wool grown in New Zealand was worth £220,000 more than the ninety-one million pounds grown in 1886. More startling still are the changes shown in the following table :—

Victorian Wool, Weight and Price

Season.	Bales.	Estimated Value.
1898-1899	172,951	£1,729,510
1899-1900	194,368	3,012,704
1900-1901	193,914	1,551,312

When to this is added the possibility of drought, is it any wonder that the Australian farmer is not a lymphatic person ?

While there is much going to and fro among the colonies, immigration to Australia has for the present almost ceased. In the decade beginning with 1851, 569,000 persons entered what is now the Commonwealth. In that ending with 1900 the excess of arrivals over departures was but 26,515. The figures for New Zealand in the same two periods were 44,742 and 27,211. To some extent the contrast may be explained by the abandonment of State-aided immigration. Victoria gave this up as long ago as 1873; all the other colonies but one discontinued it between 1885 and 1891; Queensland persevered eight years longer, but Queensland has now followed the example of the others. In the main, however, the check to the inflow has not been due to any change of policy, but to economic causes—dull times and the passing of the more attractive Crown lands into private hands. New Zealand, which has had six prosperous years, has gained nearly 36,000 people from over-sea since the beginning of 1892, and Western Australia over 100,000. Immigrants will still come where there is gold, work, or land for them.

Along with the striking falling-off of immigration, there has been a check to another movement less well-known but by no means unimportant. The proportion of successful colonists who return to Great Britain to live there is now much less than it was a generation ago. The effect, social and political, of the arrest of these two streams—the big, rather impecunious stream outwards from Britain, the small, usually wealthy stream homewards—is already considerable. It is strengthening national feeling in Australia. It is a bad thing for any community when a number of its most experienced or successful members leave it. It is bad when a larger

number look forward to doing so, and regard the colonies merely as a place to make money in. Such a feeling interferes with the organic completeness of their society. It is only one of the evils which precede or follow absenteeism.

A more significant feature has been the fall in the birth-rate. It was very high; it is now very low. In thirty-five years it has declined from about 42 in the thousand to 27. In the same time the death-rate has declined rather more than 5 in the thousand, and stood in the year 1900 at the low figure of 11·36.[1] There was therefore in 1900 an excess of births over deaths at the rate of 15·64. In Europe this would be reckoned an ample margin. In the colonies it seems low when compared with the margin of over 28 shown by South Australia a generation ago, or the still higher excess shown by New Zealand as late as 1876-80. In Australia the fall has been constant since 1865, and was most marked in Victoria between that year and 1880. In New Zealand, which is sometimes pointed at as a terrible example of sterility, the decline began to be rapid about 1880, continued to be so until 1892, and has been much slower since. For five years the birth-rate there has fluctuated between 25 and 26.[2] It may be, therefore, that the decline has been arrested. So far it has left New Zealand, thanks to her light death-rate, with a higher excess-rate of births over deaths than Great Britain, or even the Commonwealth. There is

[1] Coghlan.

[2] New Zealand birth-rate and death-rate during last five years:—

	Birth-rate.	Death-rate.
1897	25·96	9·14
1898	25·74	9·84
1899	25·12	10·24
1900	25·60	9·43
1901	25·34	9·81

nothing mysterious about the decrease in the size of colonial families. All authorities agree that it is due to the resolve of an educated people to maintain a fair standard of health and comfort. There is no need to suppose that the excess of births over deaths will fall below an average European margin.

For a young country, Australia has a curiously large city population. Even in New Zealand, though it is the most decentralised of the colonies, more than a fourth of the people—some 230,000, that is—live in four towns of not unequal size. Nearly half the Victorians live in Melbourne, Ballarat, and Bendigo, and more than a third of the New South Welsh in Sydney. Out of 363,000 souls in South Australia, 163,000 are found in Adelaide and its suburbs; and out of half-a-million Queenslanders, Brisbane and its environs claim 120,000. So long as Melbourne eclipsed all other centres it was the fashion to attribute this concentration to Victorian Protectionism. Now that the same phenomenon is seen at Sydney, those who do not like it profess to set it down to artificially high wages, socialistic laws, and a tendency amongst workpeople to shirk the dulness of country life. But labour is much more often in excess than deficient in country districts. Nor are there any lack of applicants for any fairly fertile and well-watered land thrown open for settlement: the applications for a good piece of Crown land are often twenty deep. I am inclined to put down urban congestion to the building of long railways through lands sparsely peopled or not peopled at all; to the consequent concentration of manufactures and oversea trade in a few large ports; to bad land laws and their result—monopoly; to low prices for farm produce; and, in Australia, to long-continued droughts. The connection sought to be established between over-

grown cities and Labour laws is met by the following table, showing the total population of the six capitals of the Australian States in 1881, 1891, 1901 :—

1881	. . .	669,801
1891	. . .	1,143,315, increase 473,514
1901	. . .	1,332,072, „ 188,757

Thus it is seen that the growth of the large cities in the last decade has been less than half what it was in the preceding ten years. Yet, as this book will show, the colonial Labour laws and socialistic experiments, which are especially singled out for attack in Europe, are almost all the work of the years since 1890.

Those who picture colonists as a race of robust farmers, shepherds, cattle-men, gold-diggers, and bush-fellers, think the urban colonist almost an anomaly. But colonial cities, however unnatural on paper, are not disagreeable to the eye or unwholesome to the lungs. It is easy to live a healthy, manly life there. Only in spots rare enough to be curiosities will you find the overcrowded slum and reeking alley, the haunts of the drunkard, the loafer, the thief, the prostitute ; and since public opinion has the grace to be heartily and openly ashamed of such eyesores as there are, I do not think their number will grow. Nowhere do the poor live herded together out of sight of grass and trees, and catching but glimpses of blue sky and the light of heaven. No class need breathe at night the heavy air of swarming rookeries. By comparison with urban conditions in the old world, a colonial town may be defined as a fairly extensive district, well planted, for the most part cultivated, and overspread by a not too dense population. In Melbourne, for instance, 490,000 human beings are distributed over 254 square miles, more than twice the area of the whole county of London ;

less than one-sixth of these live in the city proper, the rest are spread over the wide-stretching suburbs. Similarly in Sydney more than three-fourths of the citizens live outside the city, and Greater Sydney covers 110 square miles. Adelaide's 160,000 inhabitants are scattered about an expanse twenty miles across. Trees, grass, flowers, and, except in a few central blocks, vegetable gardens and orchards, meet the eye almost everywhere in the average colonial municipal district. Fresh air, good water, good food and plenty of it, reasonable hours of labour, good pay (as a rule), plenty of time for recreation—these things explain why large urban populations do not entail physical or moral degeneracy, and why you can have towns with a death-rate as low as 11 in the thousand.

Let it be admitted of colonial cities that they are strictly modern collections of shops, warehouses, and dwelling-houses, comfortable but mostly commonplace, and without the art treasures, the historical associations, and the architectural grandeur of the finer towns of Europe. To the Briton, at least, it should be something to see the solidity of the work which his countrymen have been able to build up in the years since Queen Victoria came to the throne—for in 1837 even Sydney was but a petty town and Hobart a village. Then he should bear in mind that colonial towns are hives of workers, with no idle class of dilettanti or mere pleasure-seekers, and with hardly a millionaire. They show what communities of busy people, seldom very rich, as seldom miserably poor, can do in the way of organising a decent, orderly, progressive civilisation.

Though there are no villages in the country, there are collections of houses called townships. When young these are blots on nature's face almost as ugly as

the lines and lumps of dingy red or khaki-colour, the advanced guards of brick-and-mortar, which invade the green fields near English cities. But there is this difference. The township usually improves. The houses therein are not jammed together. There is room between them for gardens, lawns, trees, and hedgerows, and these come in time. Sunshine and a water-supply hasten their growth. Plantations shoot up; creepers begin to drape the box-like walls and iron roofs of the dwellings. The township which is a blotch for the first ten years of its life often becomes rather a pleasant sight a decade later. Its public-houses cease to be merely rowdy dens of grog and grease. At the end of the first generation the residents show you a park, and have some reason for taking pride in their public gardens. A few years more and they form a Scenery Preservation Society.

As already said, the primary colonial industries are grazing and mining. Many references will be made to the former in the chapters on land questions. So it may be enough here to point out that grazing now is not merely depasturing sheep and cattle on the native grasses of immense pastoral runs. Except in the dry interior, the size of holdings, and consequently of flocks and herds, is being decreased by subdivision. There are twenty million sheep in New Zealand, but the average size of the flocks is about a thousand head. In the same colony the better lands are being fast laid down in sown English grasses. Meat-freezing, a phenomenon of the last twenty years, helps to account for this. Dairy-farming, moreover, has opened a new field. The value of butter exported from Victoria and New Zealand together exceeds two millions a year, and in New South Wales also dairying makes rapid strides. As might be ex-

pected, diversity of climate is causing Australian and New Zealand farmers to follow different paths. Australian sheep-breeders remain faithful to the merino, which in New Zealand furnishes but a fraction of the flocks.

It is the same with agriculture. Australia grows wheat, wine, and sugar; New Zealand produces oats, cheese, and root-crops. Fruit-growing is common to both, and in that Tasmania cuts a creditable figure. Generally, in estimating recent progress it must be borne in mind that the eastern Australian interior has been cruelly plagued with drought for eight years. In their efforts to cope with drought the Australians have since 1829 sunk more than a thousand artesian wells. Four-fifths of these are in Queensland, westward of the Dividing Range, and almost all the rest in New South Wales. The water-bearing area is underlaid with cretaceous rock strata, the deposits of an ancient shallow sea; the rainfall soaking down into them is held as in a sponge, and the well-sinkers, striking a stratum where it is tilted, tap it in the lower portion of the slope. Then, gushing up under hydraulic pressure to find its own level, the water often spouts above ground. The flow may be hot and occasionally saline, but is almost always useful for stock, though not always for irrigation. Valuable as the wells are to the owner of flocks and herds, they cannot take the place of the rain of heaven. The wells of Queensland alone send up more than enough water to supply Greater London. It is estimated, however, that even a bore yielding half a million gallons daily cannot fully irrigate more than one hundred acres. Boring is an expensive process; it costs thirty-five shillings a foot, and in the deepest bore in Australia the pipe goes down five thousand feet.

Gold so overshadows other minerals that people are apt to forget that New South Wales and New Zealand work large mines of excellent coal, and that the first-named is a considerable producer of silver. Still, so long as the value of the yearly output of gold is anywhere near £16,000,000, no other mining will rival its importance. The memorable day on which Hargreaves struck gold near Bathurst was the 12th February 1851. Fifty-one years of gold-mining in the Seven Colonies have added £460,000,000 sterling to the world's gold supply. The story of the earlier gold discoveries in Australia is probably as well known as any episode in the history of the British colonies, except, possibly, Wolfe's capture of Quebec. What is not quite so well known, perhaps, is that the romance of gold discovery in Australia and New Zealand is not by any means at an end even yet. Fortunes still reward the adventurer and hardships overcome the unlucky; and to go no further afield than Cornhill, the manipulation of mining shares has added new chapters to the romance of rascality. Science has come to the aid of enterprise in a score of ways—ingenious, interesting, sometimes astonishing. Deep sinking has revived field after field supposed to have been worked out, and has given them a second lease of life often longer and more profitable than the first. No sooner has the surface of alluvial country been skimmed than it has been found possible to penetrate to the deeper drifts; and the working of these again has been followed up by the development of the quartz reef, now the chief source of the mineral supply. The cyanide process has enabled men to save particles of gold so fine that whole reefs are worked at a handsome profit, in the stone of which no gold can be seen by the naked eye. Finally, those strange, almost

grotesque machines, the gold dredges of the South Island of New Zealand, are searching the beds of the mountain torrents there, and collecting from the sand and gravel of the rivers the gold which their currents have swept down from the mountains during centuries of attrition.

Fifteen years ago the best that colonists could say of gold-mining in Australasia was that it would die hard. Then the yield had been slowly but steadily falling for seventeen years. In 1871 the year's output had been 2,378,000 ounces. In 1886 it had gone down to 1,257,000 ounces, a reduction of nearly one-half. In 1887 the Yilgarn field was opened in West Australia, and in that year a remarkable recovery began. The increase in Australasia's production has been so great that the commercial world hardly felt the cutting off of the Rand from civilisation by the South African war; for the Australian increase equals the Rand's whole annual output five years ago. In no one of the years since 1851 has the mineral figured otherwise than largely on the colonial export list; and it was reserved for 1899, the forty-ninth year of Australasian gold-mining, to show the record output, £17,361,472 of gold. The day has passed by, then, for speaking of this industry as a mere feverish thing, a cause of temporary inflation, to be followed inevitably by lassitude and exhaustion. It is possible for goldfields to be abandoned, and for mining communities to disappear, as they vanished from Mashonaland and Midian. But in the colonies the miner is almost always the pioneer of the cultivator. In fertile, well-watered countries he is soon surrounded by permanent food-producing settlers. Even in the desert, as at Coolgardie and Kalgurli, he is followed by a water-supply sometimes, as there, a work on a scale

worthy of Roman engineers. And in Australia, wherever water is brought, the desert can never become the desert again. It is, however, wasting time to discuss what may become of the gold-bearing districts after they have ceased to bear gold. The value of their aggregate output of the last three years approaches fifty millions.

I have not the figures of the colonies' manufactures for the year 1901; but it would probably not be far wrong to estimate the number of men, women, and children employed on them at 230,000, and the value of the yearly output at £36,000,000, after making a liberal deduction on account of fuel and materials. The industries are nearly all connected with working up raw material of the country into food, clothing, or other goods to be consumed at home. The chief exceptions are freezing and meat-preserving factories. Four-fifths of the manufacturing is done in Victoria, New South Wales, and New Zealand. A good many European writers are contemptuous of colonial manufactures, and regard them as puny, artificial things, because some of them have been nursed into life by Protective tariffs. They are now, however, large enough to be of use and importance to the colonists, who rate their value highly, and are not at present likely to run any risk of sacrificing them through any sudden conversion to Cobdenism. Now that the Federal tariff has destroyed Free Trade in New South Wales, there is no longer any exception to the Protectionist fiscal policy which most of the colonies adopted many years ago. The Australian and New Zealand tariffs are not of the M'Kinley order: an American High Protectionist would smile at them. They are compromises. Their primary object is to raise revenue. The landed interest is too powerful

to allow very much revenue to be raised by direct taxes. More than three-fourths of the taxation, therefore, is raised through the customs, which yield about £11,000,000 in a financial year. The taxes on stimulants and narcotics are extremely heavy. It was the need of colonial treasuries for an ample customs revenue which gave the Protectionists their opportunity. To no small extent the Protective duties may be regarded as concessions given to them to secure votes for the purely revenue duties. The universal drift into Protectionism on the part of England's children is, however, odd. It began in the hour of Free Trade's complete triumph in the mother country. It was not fostered by national or racial repugnance, for colonial duties are chiefly levied on British goods. It owed nothing to the corrupt lobbying of manufacturing corporations; at the outset no such bodies existed. The Protectionists draw their strength chiefly from three articles of popular faith steadfastly held by multitudes of colonists. The first is that a variety of industries is a prime necessity to any community; the second, that internal exchange is more profitable than oversea trade to countries which are not their own sea-carriers; the third is that no country can become rich solely by growing food and raw material for foreigners. The continuous fall in prices between 1873 and 1895 has strengthened the belief in article number three. Moreover, for various reasons, among which are cheaper carriage and local competition, the price of manufactured goods is much lower in the colonies than it was thirty years ago. The Protectionists therefore claim that their policy has not kept up the cost of living. On the other hand, it is certain that they have not maintained the rate of wages in dull years. What Protection has done is to find

new avenues of employment: it has built factories and workshops where none existed before. One may say this without overrating the importance of the industries thus fostered. Whatever they may become, they are certainly not yet the chief influences on the economic condition of the colonies. When the London prices of wool, meat, tallow, corn, butter, and cheese are good, or when most of them are good, then—given ordinary seasons — Australia and New Zealand are prosperous. When London prices are low, they are depressed. It will be a long time before colonial tariffs alter this dependence, if they ever do.

We thus see colonial industries in transition. Manufactures are being developed, but are not yet of first importance. The greater grazing is in places yielding to the smaller, to mixed farming, and to dairying; vineyards, orchards and cane-fields are to be noted. Gold-mining holds its own, but now chiefly in the form of the working of quartz-reefs by proprietary companies. Coal-mining is established and expanding.

The oversea trade is large: that of the Commonwealth was about £87,000,000 in the year 1900, and that of New Zealand above £23,000,000. Exports exceeded imports by about £7,000,000. The trade is still mainly with the mother country, and chiefly carried by English steamship lines. The trade between Australia and New Zealand is, however, borne in New Zealand vessels. Subsidised French and German lines run between Europe and Australia, and a Japanese line trades between Sydney and Japan. The United States and Germany are pushing for business, the former with considerable success. The war in South Africa has led to a large export of meat, oats, and dairy produce thither. The intercolonial trade between the seven

colonies has become large even in the face of Protectionist tariffs, and is therefore likely to increase between the six Federated States. Sydney is easily first among the seaports, and the second, Melbourne, leaves Adelaide and Freemantle very far behind. The colonies have been joined by telegraph with the Old World for thirty years, and the Pacific cable is about to join them with the New. Australia has been lately linked by cable with South Africa. The cost of cable messages, which until recently has been exceedingly high, is now being lowered. Regular mails with Europe are carried through the Suez Canal, but the fastest mail route between New Zealand and London is across North America, and this also serves Eastern Australia.

Education is mainly, though not entirely, a State function. In the primary division a very large majority of the children in every colony is enrolled in State schools. The secondary schools, though sometimes subsidised and more often endowed by the State, are usually controlled either by some religious denomination or independent corporate board. Primary education is usually free; secondary is not; nor are the universities, of which there is one in every colony, except Queensland and Western Australia. Primary education is compulsory, and in most of the colonies non-religious. The feelings of any one who observes public education in Australia and New Zealand must be mingled. It is good, yet, obviously, it ought to be better. The difficulties in the way of diffusing even a fair rudimentary education among handfuls of settlers scattered about enormous areas can scarcely be understood in countries where population is fifty or a hundred times as dense. There are more than 8500 State primary schools in Australia and New Zealand. The number

of enrolled pupils in 1900 was 752,000, and the average attendance 550,000. Compare these figures with those of the elementary schools of Scotland, where the population is about equal to the Whites in the seven colonies, and where the official return shows 767,000 enrolled pupils, and an average attendance of 636,000. To a large extent the contrast may be due to the much greater density of the Scottish population; it takes more than twice as many schools in the colonies to serve rather fewer children. But the New Zealand figures (132,000 children enrolled, average attendance 108,000) are good, and the percentage (82·9) is exactly the same as the Scottish. The Australian figures, therefore, especially those of Victoria, where the area is not enormous, require explanation. Generally speaking, the teaching in the schools is good. Nor is there any serious ground of complaint to make against the efficiency of most of the secondary schools. Their really grave defect is that they attract less than 2 per cent of the colonial children. This is not nearly enough for democracies, where every man and most women may vote, and where the proportion of voters to population is sometimes astonishing.[1] The Universities, where most of the professors are British, have conferred degrees on more than 5000 men and women students, and their degrees are not carelessly given. But though their work is genuine, their methods are certainly not ahead of those to be observed in Edinburgh and Glasgow. Seeing what is the political case of the colonies, the colleges should teach political economy thoroughly; most of them do not. The little they do teach might be up to date; it seldom is. The enthusiasm shown

[1] If the proportion of persons recording votes were as large in the United Kingdom as in New Zealand, about 15,000,000 adults would go to the poll.

for public education in the larger colonies between 1870 and 1880—when most of the chief Education Acts were passed—has scarcely been equalled since, though in the last few years a beginning of technical education has at last been made.

As is well known, the public debt is large — it approaches £270,000,000—and since eight-ninths of it has been borrowed in London, it is the mark of continuous criticism in Great Britain. Much of this is honest, and is based upon more or less study and information; some is reckless, violent, and wrong. Articles on colonial finance frequently appear in London newspapers full of blunders so ludicrous that if they were perpetrated in English finance the writers would be dismissed by their indignant editors. No sensible colonist would suggest that colonial budgets do not need criticism. Speaking generally, they probably stand in need of much closer and better-informed scrutiny than they usually get either in parliaments or newspapers. Now and then, of course, they do get it. If any one wishes to see how thoroughgoing newspaper criticism can sometimes be in the better sort of colonial newspapers, they may study the *Age* and the *Argus* in the earlier months of 1902. But wild accusations of universal corruption (which does not exist), and wilder predictions of bankruptcy (which is utterly unlikely), are not wise methods. They will not reveal flaws or frighten rash treasurers into economy. Speaking broadly, I assert without hesitation that the colonies have done wisely in making land transport a State function, and in floating State loans to be spent on telegraphs, telephones, tramways, waterworks, wells, harbours, land purchase, loans to farmers. If they had not done this their country would now be in the grip of

FAIRFIELD UNIVERSITY
FAIRFIELD, CONN.
19910

financial and landowning companies; their masters would be forming the inevitable trusts and pools; industry would have to provide dividends on a number of huge, over-capitalised concerns; colonists would have to pay through the nose for every public convenience; and democracy in parliament would be bought or bullied as the policy of the financiers might seem to require. Nor can there be a reasonable doubt that most of the public loans, perhaps nine-tenths of them, have been well spent. The direct and indirect return is found in the ease with which the interest on them is paid, the rapid development of trade and industry in the last thirty years, and the high standard of comfort enjoyed by the colonists. Saying this, and saying it with emphasis, does not debar a writer from admitting that considerable sums of public money have been misspent; that State railway management wants watching; that the pace at which borrowing should go on and the price which should be paid for money are questions to which colonial taxpayers should give a more sustained and less fitful attention; and that if energy should be the first quality in colonial treasurers and ministers of public works, prudence ought to be the second.

Society in the colonies is supposed to resemble a European society "topped and tailed." There is no aristocracy, no old-established landed gentry, set over tenant-farmers, no hierarchy. On the other hand, the mass of dire poverty is much smaller and less hopeless. There are paupers: perhaps one per cent of the population depends on public or private charity. [I make the estimate with hesitation, and exclude most of the old age pensioners.] There are refuges and benevolent asylums, there are destitute children maintained in industrial schools. Still not only is the proportion

of actual pauperism smaller, but the condition of the working class above the submerged division is better. There is nothing like the same large stratum of workers just not starving, just not in the workhouse, as the class revealed in England by the investigations of Mr. Charles Booth and Mr. Seebohm Rowntree. Is colonial society, then, simply a reproduction of the four or five intermediate sections of British? Not altogether. The absence of the privileged, the absence in great part of the miserable, have visible effects. In small democracies the individual counts for more. He need not feel stifled or lost as he often does among the myriads of great populations. Hence, to some extent, the energy, spring, and hopefulness which, with a power of initiative and of rough-and-ready contrivance and organisation, are, perhaps, the best of the special qualities of colonists. Those who believe that these are just the qualities which governmentalism blights must find Australia and New Zealand a paradox. Amongst their people "the State is more and more," but the individual does *not* wither. Defects they have. You do not go to them for ripe scholarship, a feeling for the beautiful in art, patient study, or reverence for the unworldly or transcendental. They are men of action or nothing.

This book, however, is not to be an attempt at an appreciation of colonial character, or even a survey of colonial democracy, but an account of a number of laws and administrative changes and experiments. It is already time for me to press on to public affairs. I have not even space to dwell upon the many features of public business and institutions which closely resemble those found in other Anglo-Saxon countries. My task is to select, as far as possible, such political characteristics as are novel. And undoubtedly the

main peculiarities are, first, the almost unlimited trust placed in the people; second, the free use they make of their power; third, the drift, or semi-conscious progress, into governmentalism.

For reasons discussed in the next chapter, I regard 1890 as the date of a new departure in colonial politics. The tendency just referred to has certainly been much accentuated since that year, and has become plainer and less unconscious. But it is no new thing. Before 1890, the State was already the great landlord, the chief employer of labour, was virtually sole owner of the land transport, as well as of the telegraphs and telephones. It undertook the business of land registration and transfer, and in one colony, New Zealand, had established a large Life Insurance Office, and a Public Trust Office, the work of which is pre-eminently beneficial. In addition to the duties of land-settlement, nearly all the colonies had supplied the labour-market by importing many thousand immigrants. Protection for native industries was a general policy, and bonuses were offered, notably the Victorian bonuses on exported butter. In addition to railway-making, the Governments were spending millions on roads, bridges, harbour works, and water-supply. They had always taken the completest powers of inspection over flocks and herds, and in the eighties were beginning to inspect factories in the interests of women and children workers. Last, but not least, by a series of Acts, chiefly passed between 1873 and 1880, they had broken with clerical schools, and had developed their own systems of primary education.

Some readers ask with a gasp—Can the force of State interference further go? These volumes are written to answer the question. First, however, this is the place for a word or two upon the parliaments and politicians,

the instruments by which the series of experiments I am to describe have been and are being made. When self-government was given to the colonies, bicameral parliaments were a condition of the gift, and the Commonwealth has continued the system. There are, therefore, fourteen legislative houses in Australia and two more in New Zealand, with a total membership of 849. Seven of the eight Lower Houses, and four of the Upper, are paid. The salaries range from £200 to £400 a year. What has been the effect of paying members? It increases the number of candidates, but its chief result has been to make members work harder. Four out of five attend to their duties closely. Not only is the annual output of statutes remarkable—it is sometimes as high as one hundred in a session, while twenty-five is thought very low—but all but a few of the representatives study the bills and take their share of committee-work. Onlookers who dislike State energy are shocked at these prolific legislatures; but it is no argument against the efficiency of a machine to say that it works rapidly. That most debating in colonial parliaments is insufferably dull is true, though Victoria has experimented with the closure, and New Zealand has that excellent thing, a time limit. It is also true, unhappily, that in nearly every House there are occasional "scenes." Ninety per cent of the members, however, are sober, industrious, and intelligent. That all are not so is mainly the fault of the newspapers, which prefer to badger the abler and more earnest politicians rather than try to rid public life of the inferior sort. Colonial Houses have borrowed most of their procedure, and some of their cant phrases, from the House of Commons, but the children are not very like the parent. No small gathering of fifty or a hundred can resemble the huge

legislature at Westminster. Then poor men predominate in the young parliaments, and are sensitively responsive to the wishes of the poorer classes outside. The contrast is not merely one of dress and language: the whole mental standpoint is different.

Eight hundred and fifty legislators, mostly paid, representing a population of less than five millions, cause the parliamentary machine to appear both large and costly. In Australia there is a movement on foot to cut down the size of the State parliaments and the salary paid to each member. This is not without reason, inasmuch as Federation has relieved the States of important functions. The Radicals and Labour members are less anxious than the Conservatives to reduce the number or pay of the Lower Houses, and urge that the best economy would be to abolish the Upper. In holding the contrary view the Conservatives commonly have the support of the non-political taxpayer. I am disposed to think that the tendency of the future will be to keep legislatures small, but to pay members pretty well. The Progressives are never likely to abandon their hostility to Upper Houses and their desire to substitute a referendum as the preferable check. So far, however, the Upper Houses easily hold their ground. Of the Federal Senate I shall speak later. Four of the others are elective, and are accounted stronger checks on the Progressives than are the nominated Chambers.

In colonial politics the theatre is small and provincial, the actors are close to the audience, and are very little helped by scenery or costume. In older countries public life sometimes strikes the onlooker as a grand conspiracy to keep up appearances. The other extreme is found in the colonies; there, there is less hypocrisy but more coarseness, and at times an utter lack of dignity which

cannot be good for any one. The hard work expected from paid members, the throng of novel questions and proposals, the incessant and often savagely insulting personalities of the newspapers, the lack of stable party organisation, the frequent elections, cheap but harassing, the constant danger in which all members, even the leaders, live of losing their seats, the rough-and-tumble fighting in debate and on the platform,—these conditions have their effect in developing the types of politician most fitted to endure them. Of these types three seem to me at once the most interesting and the most often met with.

The first includes many of the more popular men, and its most notable characteristics are strength and staying power. Behind the strength there is as a rule plenty of energy and power of work; most of the leaders are exceedingly industrious—at any rate when in office. They must have thick skins, or the newspapers would worry them to death, and must know that a cheerful countenance and a genial handshake gain more friends than the loftiest aims. Since they must be accessible to almost everybody, they have to waste hours daily over fools and knaves, and they usually learn to bear the fools patiently and meet the knaves with reticence or "bluff." Typically they are big men who in early life have lived much in the open air; so when they become engrossed in the sedentary life of politics they are apt to put on flesh. Their manner may be anything they please except chilly; their dress may look as though they had slept in their clothes—nobody will mind; their character may show many defects except the unpardonable weakness of timidity. Bulky, bold, hearty, these democratic captains are of various callings—are run-holders, solicitors, con-

tractors, surveyors, auctioneers, mechanics. They are found on both sides in politics, and from the shrewdest, quickest, and most vigorous of them many of the best-known leaders are drawn. A voice of good compass and a capacity to hold their own in face of an angry or "cheeky" crowd are almost indispensable to them. Polish or skill in rhetoric are not, and the gifts of wit and sarcasm are positive disadvantages. Nearly all of them are personally honest. It is not their business to be original thinkers or well-equipped students. Men of affairs, they have to lead and push; to keep their heads when the unexpected happens; to judge of chances amid the hugger-mugger bustle of sessions and elections; and by keeping a following together, to get for the country the best results obtainable from a party system which is often a crazy machine.

The second type is as different from the first as nerves are from muscles. It is represented by professional men, usually barristers, often though not always physically lighter than the first, less rough, less inclined to coarseness, less genial; but combative, fluent, sometimes tremendous talkers. The more successful are amongst the hardest of brain-workers in the effort to do justice at once to politics and bar practice. The picked men amongst them are well-read, and intellectually above most of their brother members. They furnish the best speakers in the colonies. Sometimes these lawyer-politicians combine the qualities of their profession with the ample form and jovial manner of the first type. Then they often lead parties, as Kingston and Reid have led them. But quite as often they desert politics for the Bench, or are kept in the second places by their profession's demands on their time, or by its unpopularity, or by a certain want of

sympathy of mind or manner in themselves. Among them are found most of the few doctrinaires. Among them also are, or have been, some of the most honourable and high-principled men in colonial politics. Such are, or were, Higinbotham and Deakin in Victoria, and Richmond in New Zealand.

Within the last decade the Labour parties have furnished a third type, less burly than the first, and with less of the trained gladiator than the second. The Labour leaders are often short men with the nervous build of the skilled mechanic who reads and argues, and frets at the bars of "low birth and iron fortune." The boisterous, thirsty demagogue, with brazen front and leathern lungs, who bulks so largely in certain unflattering descriptions of colonial parliaments, belongs more often to the lower middle-class than to the selected representatives of Labour. The latter are distinguished by their Trade Unionist knowledge of matters affecting their class, an appetite for details, a capacity to act together, a certain not very exhilarating argumentative power, and no mean share of tenacity. Shining talent or exceptional force they seldom show: their real strength lies in their loyalty to their class and in their power of cohesion. In these they have taught colonial parliaments a lesson, for it was in discipline and party fidelity that colonial politicians of the older sort, Radicals especially, were notoriously lacking. Their rôle is to press the first type to apply its fighting and managing power, and the second its knowledge and dexterity, to secure reforms which Labour believes will lift the workers up to a level never reached by them anywhere before.

To give a famous instance of the first-mentioned type I quote two passages descriptive of Parkes in his later

days, with the proviso, however, that this extraordinary man was in some ways a caricature of his class, while in one respect he rose above it—he did care for books.

Imagine the man as he is in his place in Parliament. Large and gross in build, with a great mass of white hair running all over his head and face, he rises full of a self-conscious pomposity, and startles one's ears with a piping treble. The inane and tedious vulgarity of the rhetoric—the appalling aspirates dropped and added in every sentence—the hideous grammatical and prosodial blunders, seem the fitting expression of an egotism as empty as it is oppressive. Watch and listen to him when the wheels of debate begin to glow. Of late he has too often been feeble and languid, sitting huddled up, with weary, blinking eyelids, the not unpathetic image of a big, sick anthropomorphoid ape, well stricken in years. But that has only made the occasional exhibitions of his "old form" the more striking. Attacked (and no politician in Australia has been habitually attacked with such virulent personal animus as he), he is a new man. See him now upon his feet, with all his hair, beard, and features vibrating with pugnacity. The rhetoric is as vulgar as ever, but no one could call it tedious or inane. (*The Australians*, by Francis Adam.)

In the House no other man of our decade ever led so well. Eternally watchful and alert, he sat with folded arms, following the sinuosities of debate, and with unfailing instinct knowing the right time to intervene. No one could recede with greater alacrity when peril was near; no one could better discern the psychological moment to declare war. He had all the organ-stops of the orator and debater, from the dove-like answer which turneth away wrath to the fierce, beast-like scream of anger and revenge. He had no originality, and never pioneered a measure. When the public mind was ripe, he annexed the measure in a fine style of high marauding. But of all the evidences of his political sagacity the most supreme was his knowledge of the right time to ride for a fall. Whenever the Treasury was getting empty, whenever depression or financial trouble glimmered in the distance, the old man rode for a defeat on some "'igh-sounding" principle, and let the other fellows come in for the bad time. . . . He rarely made a mistake —but he made one. His fatal blunder was in his erroneous

judgment of Reid. He never dreamt that a jocular club Conservative was a potential reformer. (*The Bulletin.*)

As examples of the second type I might take Griffith, Stout, or Wise. Or I might quote some of the sentences in which Gisborne sketches the lean body, Latin mind, and strenuous soul of Christopher Richmond. But I prefer to select a man who, while as entirely the antithesis of Parkes as Richmond was, is better known in Australia. I will therefore give an extract from Morris's *Memoir of George Higinbotham*:—

He was often the dupe of inferior men, to whom he deferred absurdly. His extreme humility, optimism, and lamentable lack of world-wisdom accounted for this failing, from which his habitual self-respect should have saved him. Of vanity he had none. From responsibility he shrank instinctively, as long as conviction did not compel him to assume it; but feeling the compulsion he would have assumed the responsibility of anything. His colleagues dreaded his injudicious enthusiasm for outspoken truth, and sat on thorns often enough while he was on his legs. They revered him, I might say loved him, as they did none other. Said one, "I never believed in the Admirable Crichton until I knew him"; and another, "If Higinbotham had lived four hundred years ago, they'd have made him a saint, and we'd have been worshipping him now." A member not given to effusive saluting, said, "To Higinbotham I must always take off my hat." He took the arm of an unsteady acquaintance once, but the latter said, "No, I'm not in a fit state . . . to touch *you*."

The man—the man rose high above the politician or the judge. The highest type of intelligence and integrity yet vouchsafed to Australia was greatly admired of the many, but he had also, what he valued more, the love of many.

. . . . .

In all the bitterness of party conflict, violent as were his attacks on the party opposed to him, never a single word offensive to an individual passed his lips. Nor was this due solely to a restraint placed upon himself in public. Those who knew him best knew that even in the most private conversation he would not speak against others. This habit he carried even to an extreme,

as he would be slow to condemn even the most notorious scoundrel. Once when he was walking with a friend, the latter censured a politician for certain wrong-doing. There was no doubt the deed had been done, and no doubt that it was wrong; but Higinbotham disliked speaking evil of a man behind his back, and at once silenced his friend. With all this there was never any doubt whether he condemned wrong.

It has been shown that he maintained the dignity of his office. This official pride was perfectly consistent with an extreme simplicity of life and manner.

Of the third type I choose Thomas Glassey, one of the most genuine and amiable, though hardly most successful, of Labour leaders:—

He was born in the north of Ireland, but passed his early life in Northumberland, where he was the friend and colleague of Mr. Thomas Burt, M.P. On coming to Queensland he earned his living as a letter-carrier, but he had not been long engaged in that occupation before he turned from labour to the more congenial task of organising it, and a series of letters addressed to the Postmaster-General, alleged to have been couched in discourteous language, led to his dismissal. In 1888 he entered the Queensland Parliament, and was for some time the only labour member. As a champion of an unpopular cause in a House composed largely of capitalist elements, Mr. Glassey displayed by no means inconsiderable qualities of courage, tact, and temper. . . . He gives one the impression of great simplicity and earnestness of character. His education and habits are those of the better class of artisan. He has the small stature, slight physique, suppressed egotism, and conscious incorruptibility which distinguish more than one of the modern English Labour leaders. His qualities seem those of a rhetorician and an advocate rather than a statesman, and he is probably more familiar with the ideal than the actual. His party, he told me, were primarily socialists; the whole competitive system must go; it was rotten, and he saw no effective way of remedying it but by the State becoming the universal employer. If the Labour party found a party liberal and advanced enough they would give them their support; but what they aimed at was victory at the polls. (From *The Labour Party in Queensland*, by Anton Bertram.)

CHAPTER II

THE PROGRESSIVE MOVEMENT[1]

THE first New Zealand Parliament met in 1854, and the first Australian Parliament in 1856. Though there had for some years before that been small half-elective, half-nominated councils in several colonies, these dates may be accepted for the beginnings of self-government. But though only then relieved of despotism, the colonists were not without experience of free institutions and the management of public affairs. Most of the adults had

[1] AUTHORITIES.—"Australian Politics," by R. B. Wise, *Macmillan's Magazine*, 1889; "Payment of Members, an Australian Example," by C. Gavan Duffy, *Contemporary Review*, April 1893; "State Socialism and Labour Government in Antipodean Britain," by the Earl of Onslow, *Proceedings of the Royal Colonial Institute*, 1892; "Australasian Democracy," by H. de R. Walker, London, 1897. Dilke's *Problems of Greater Britain*; "The Labour Party in New South Wales," by Sir Henry Parkes, *Contemporary Review*, 1892; "The Labour Party in Queensland," by Anton Bertram, *Contemporary Review*, 1895; "Progressive Legislation in New Zealand," by Anton Bertram, *Progressive Review*, December 1896; "Le Mouvement Ouvrier en Australasie," by Anton Bertram, *Revue d'Économie Politique*, Paris, 1896; "New Australia," by A. J. Rose-Solley, *Westminster Review*, Nov. 1893; *Les Nouvelles Sociétés Anglo-Saxonnes*, by Pierre Leroy-Beaulieu, Paris, 1900; *Newest England*, by H. Demarest Lloyd, New York, 1900; *A Statistical Account of the Seven Colonies of Australasia*, by T. A. Coghlan, issue for 1900; "Social Politics in New Zealand," by Sir Julius Vogel, *Fortnightly Review*, 1892; *Australian Experiments in Industry*, by Helen Page Bates, Philadelphia, 1898; "The Labour Question in Australia," by Edmund Mitchell (supplement to the *Australasian Pastoralists' Review*, December 1892); *Le Socialisme sans Doctrines*, by A. Métin, Paris, 1901; "Nouvelle Zélande, Enquête Sociale, Politique, Economique," by A. Siegfried, *Revue Politique et Parlementaire*, Paris, January, February, March, 1899; "New Zealand," by Sir Robert Stout, *Contemporary Review*, 1899; "The Sphere of State Activity in Australia," by Sir J. A. Cockburn, *Journal of the*

been reared in the mother country. Even in the colonies they had their newspapers and free speech, criticised their governors unsparingly, harassed and interfered with them at every turn. Officials often led uncomfortable lives in Australia between 1830 and 1855, and the student now feels tempted to pity the rulers quite as often as their subjects. Though, therefore, the colonists made some odd mistakes when their handfuls of men came to control huge territories by means of copies in miniature of the great Parliament at Westminster, they never failed utterly. They understood the meaning of organisation, discussion, and compromise. Their greatest difficulty was found in acclimatising the English two-party system, without which responsible government by cabinet did not seem possible. The materials of a Conservative party appeared hard to find in communities without a court, titles, an aristocracy, a state church, a leisured and learned class, or a standing army officered by the sons of the rich and the cadets of patrician families. In the absence of these barriers Liberalism, in the English sense, might have seemed likely to languish through lack of foes to conquer. There was no wealthy manufacturing class, no luxurious "society," no wretched proletariat. Poverty there was, because there were sickness, vice, crime, and accident. But these things

Society of Arts, London, 1902; "Labour Federation in Australia," by A. Hinchcliffe in *Annual Report of Federation of Trade Unions* (English), London, 1902.

Useful summaries of recent colonial laws are found in the *Journal of Comparative Legislation*, London, and the *Annuaire de la Législation du Travail*, Brussels, 1897-1900. *The Worker* is the name of the well-known Queensland Labour newspaper, and also of a similar journal published in Sydney. *United Australia* (monthly), Sydney, is a mouthpiece of colonial individualism. For Labour programmes see the reports of the annual Trade and Labour Conferences in the various colonies. Employers' criticisms of Labour laws and proposals may be found in annual reports and proceedings of Chambers of Commerce and Manufactures.

were not seen in hideous masses. Labour was well paid, well fed, nomadic, usually in demand. There was unoccupied land; there were alluvial goldfields. All classes worked, and the life of all was comparatively rough and simple. It might well have looked impossible to organise parties of resistance and progress out of such societies. It might have been fancied, too, that the demand for Government interference would be small, and that Australia and New Zealand would be happy hunting-grounds for individualism and the philosophic anarchist.

Almost the contrary seems coming to pass. The Physiocrats would stare if they could see what democracy has come to in the seven colonies. This book's limits hardly allow me to speculate on the causes of the growth of colonial govermentalism. It would be interesting to discuss the contrast which is afforded by the individualism which permeated the North American colonies in the eighteenth century, the free play given there to private enterprise, and the consequent development of American capitalism, with results imposing, forbidding, and corrupting. All I may note here is that the settlement of the wilderness in Australia and New Zealand has not been pushed by little bands of adventurers living rifle in hand, dwelling together roughly in forest villages set in lonely clearings, far from Government control. Two centuries of warfare with the red men left their mark on American rural and local life. Unrest beneath British domination was another influence. A third was the primitive condition of society and industry, without manufactures, railways, or rapid transport, so that long generations elapsed before the coming of the factory system. These things, amongst others, contributed to that distrust of a strong, interfering central authority which has been so marked

a feature of American democracy. In rural Australia, on the other hand, we saw scattered settlers living peacefully in thinly-spread pastoral or semi-pastoral provinces. Local life and local organisation have never been intense; "municipalism" is only now beginning to be an influence. The squatters lived out of sight of their "neighbours." A square mile of agricultural land was thought a small farm. A peasant still talks of fifty acres as scarcely enough to live upon. Unarmed, loosely-knit, not oppressed, the Australian country settlements were easily influenced by the central authority. The State has always been the great colonial landlord, and, like other landlords, has been called upon to do its duty by its estates. When, in addition, the State took up the work of providing transport and of borrowing great sums to build railways, roads, and bridges, the die was cast. Government, with a partial grip of the soil and a complete grip of the land-transport, held a position too commanding for any private capitalists to challenge. It could borrow money much cheaper in London than any colonial financiers — which is mainly why it undertook to construct public works. Colonial financiers could not do the work; the intervention of English syndicates was feared and resented. So the colonists, acting through their Governments, resolved to be their own exploiters, and to build railways and lay telegraph lines for themselves. New Zealand, persuaded by Julius Vogel, took the plunge in 1870, and Australia followed. Among many consequences of this momentous departure not the least was that it accustomed colonists to great and ever greater measures of State industrial enterprise. State education and Protective tariffs had, it is possible, a share in habituating the public to governmental

activity. But it was the State ownership of land, and, above all, of the means of transport, which really set the colonists' feet on the road they are now treading. For the departures I have spoken of were all taken by the middle classes before Socialism or Labour parties were heard of. So when, after 1890, middle-class spokesmen, confronted with the new forces, would fain have harked back to the principles of individualism, they found the past policy of their class rise up in judgment against them.

In colonial parliaments the English party system has survived the rough experience of acclimatisation. Some of its faults have been transplanted with it, and its critics are persistent and unsparing. The Labour politicians, though themselves the most closely-knit and best organised parties in the colonies, have been rather fond of denouncing party. What they have really disliked, however, is the see-saw of the old middle-class parties. The last thing they think of is to loosen their own political organisation.[1] Everywhere, except in New Zealand, they have advocated elective executives, with initiative and referendum after the Swiss fashion—reforms often loosely spoken of as though they would amount to an abolition of party. There is, however, no real desire in the colonies for fixed executives, political or non-political; the Swiss elective executive has nowhere been adopted; and the Labour movement, after leading to much rather frothy

[1] In New South Wales, for instance, every Federal Labour candidate has to sign the following pledge:—

I hereby pledge myself not to oppose any selected Labour candidate. I also pledge myself, if returned to the Commonwealth Parliament, to do my utmost to ensure the carrying out of the principles embodied in the Federal Labour platform, and on such questions, and especially on questions affecting the fate of a Government, to vote as a majority of the Federal Labour party may decide at a duly-constituted caucus-meeting composed of members who have signed this or a similar pledge.

denouncing of party, has ended by strengthening the system, and in particular by giving a stability to executives unknown in colonial politics before 1890. When the first draft of the constitution of the Australian Commonwealth was framed in 1891, there was considerable doubt as to whether the old plan of a cabinet depending on the confidence of a Lower Chamber should be preserved. Before the constitution was finally settled in 1900 there had ceased to be any doubts at all. The Constitution Act suggested no change: silently the customary course was followed. The old system has, within the last ten years, received a new lease of life.

Certainly between 1854 and 1890 the difficulty found in drawing party lines and keeping them had its ludicrous consequences. In South Australia there were forty changes of ministry in thirty-seven years. In New Zealand the first four ministries were strangled in their cradles, and as late as August 1884 there came three weeks of upheaval in Wellington, in which three ministries resigned in succession. Before the coming of Sir George Turner in 1894, no Victorian premier ever held the reins for five years on end, and only two cabinets had endured for as long as three. In New South Wales executives were even shorter-lived. Before Reid was sworn in 1894, only one Prime Minister, Parkes, had managed to retain office in Sydney for four years without break. Sir Henry once just contrived to do that; no one else stayed in for more than two years and nine months. But Turner and Reid, by remaining in power for more than five years, made records in their colonies. And their records were easily eclipsed in other colonies. In Queensland since the Griffith-M'Ilwraith coalition of 1890 the same

party — the Conservative — has continued to govern. One break there was in 1899. But as the Labour Ministry which then took office was ousted within a week, the disturbance was hardly more than a semi-comic episode. In South Australia Kingston was premier for six years and a half (1893-1899), and his party, after being out for one week, in December 1899 regained office and still hold it. In New Zealand the Ballance Ministry, sworn in in January 1891, promoted one of their number to be leader on Ballance's death in 1893. The new chief, Seddon, is still Prime Minister; so the New Zealand Progressives have ruled their colony for nearly twelve years. In Western Australia, Forrest, the first premier, was not disturbed for ten years, and then withdrew of his own choice in order to enter Federal politics.

The almost French instability before 1891, the comparative fixity since, are worth a word here. Colonial ministries are often reconstructed for purely personal reasons. Such changes do not involve the coming in or going out of parties. Prime Ministers and their colleagues are seldom men of independent means. They usually have businesses which demand a share of their time, and every now and then some one has to leave office to attend to his private affairs. Again, ministerial life in the colonies is one of hard and harassing work. Ministers are not hedged about with any protective dignity. Many of them suffer in health, some of them break down, occasionally one dies in harness. Nearly all of them die poor. These things have a share in abridging the lives of cabinets. In the main, however, parliamentary parties prior to 1891 were always more or less fluid. There was little or no machine organisation outside the Houses to compel discipline within.

At public meetings candidates were pledged on certain prominent questions, and were usually accounted as owing allegiance to this or that leader. But the opportunities of disloyalty were innumerable, and full advantage was taken of them. Men would keep platform pledges to the letter and break them in spirit,—could even, thanks to ignorance or apathy amongst their constituents, ignore them altogether. There was very little direct corruption; but unscrupulous men would support ministries for what grants they hoped to get for their districts. Men still more unscrupulous joined or deserted parties simply in the hope of office. There were members avowedly independent, who were occasionally the most honourable men in public life, but more often the reverse. On the whole, the experience of parliamentary parties without tight bonds and lasting lines of cleavage was depressing to most of those behind the scenes. It was emphatically a life in which it was wise to remember that your enemy might some day be your friend, while your friend would probably become your enemy.

This kaleidoscopic time of unrest, with its constant changes and intrigues, was by no means due merely to the absence of elaborate and costly party machinery. It was mainly the result of the absence of definite comprehensive party creeds. Almost all classes and sections were honestly united on some questions, and honestly divided on others. Generally speaking, the most obvious line for parties to divide on was the agrarian question. Politicians answering more or less to English Radicals advocated close settlement. The same men usually urged extensions of the franchise, free State education, the exclusion of coloured aliens, a restriction of the powers of the Upper Houses, trien-

nial parliaments, and payment of members. But while most colonial Radicals were Protectionists, some—in New South Wales many—were not; while nearly all supported secular education, those of them who were Catholics opposed it. The borrowing and expenditure of large loans on public works was a constant cause of division of opinion. Another cross current was formed by the liquor question. In New Zealand the Maori tribes, their wars and their lands, long dominated all other public topics. In the same colony there was a constitutional battle between Centralism and Provincialism, which lasted for nearly a quarter of a century. In Australia Federation was a disturbing factor between 1890 and 1900. Yet there were parties. In the conflicts over the franchise, the Upper Houses, land laws and land taxes, education, payment of members, and the exclusion of Chinese, politicians invoked some of the old English catch-words, and in appeals to the working classes learned to call themselves Liberals and their opponents Tories. In Victoria a coalition of leaders killed any Radical progress between 1883 and 1892. In Queensland in 1890 a similar coalition between Griffiths and M'Ilwraith had a similar effect. In New South Wales the fiscal cross-issue was a paralysing influence in the eighties. But in New Zealand and South Australia there were Liberal groups with defined principles, and headed by leaders with ideals, and in 1890 Ballance in New Zealand and Cockburn in South Australia led parties which might be called Radical without misuse of language.

By 1891 these parties and colonial Radicals generally had come to represent doctrines very different from those of the individualist utilitarians who furnished English Liberalism with ideas in the early Victorian decades.

They were deeply tinged with socialism. It was not German, much less French Socialism. Here and there, no doubt, visionaries had dreams of Utopias more or less like the communities of Fourier and St. Simon. Here and there might be found some student who knew of Lassalle, or, through the medium of English tracts and paraphrases, had scraped acquaintance with Karl Marx. Tens of thousands read Bellamy's *Looking Backward.* Many studied, and some borrowed from, the Fabian Essays. Such socialism as filtered through newspapers and magazines was all English and of the cautious or tentative kind. The twelve busy years which have passed since 1890 began, filled as they have been with socialistic experiments, have not built up any colonial party of dogmatic socialism. Englishmen have lately been asked to distinguish between "a war" and "a sort of war." Students of State experiments in the colonies may, if they please, distinguish between socialism and a sort of socialism. The German phalanx which ranked itself behind Liebknecht and Bebel would probably decline to acknowledge any colonial party—with the possible exception of the Queensland Labour men—as a socialist regiment. But though there is no Social Democratic party, there is a good deal of democratic socialism. It is none the less real because it is "a sort of" socialism, finds expression in acts, and eschews short cuts to "a new earth which will make the old heaven unnecessary."

The opinions of an average colonial democrat are a curious blend. English and Radical on constitutional reform and public education, they include fiscal Protectionism and views on the exclusion of alien and undesirable immigrants which might turn the hair of an

English humanitarian Whig grey. Our democrat has probably read *Progress and Poverty* and Wallace on *Land Nationalisation*, but his proposals of agrarian reform do not go much further than John Stuart Mill's later suggestions,—that is to say, he would tax the unearned increment pretty heavily, would stop the further sale of public lands, would resume some private estates at a just price, approves of fixing fair rents, stoutly advocates peasant proprietorship, and, perhaps, as a pious opinion, professes a kindness for co-operative agriculture. He has heard of English municipalism and admires it, but is only just beginning to imitate it.[1] City life in the colonies is but now in crying need of scientific collective development. Commonly in the colonies "the State" means the Central Government, and it is to that power that the colonial democrat has hitherto looked for progress and co-operative effort.

In its practical outcome, then, the colonial "sort of socialism" differs from French inasmuch as it has not led to the formation of co-operative societies with members who at least dream of communism. It differs from German inasmuch as its disciples avowedly take short views; its work is done piecemeal; many of those responsible therefor are ignorant or contemptuous of theory, while those who have ideals are wary of flaunting them. It differs from English in exploiting centralism rather than municipalism, as the main source of progress. Yet, if it be State socialism, it is democratic and not bureaucratic. The truth is that though the colonial Progressives have transplanted much from the mother country and something from America, their needs, their

[1] At the beginning of 1902 municipal reform was given a front place on the Labour platform in New South Wales. It included a proposal to empower municipalities to conduct any industry demanded by a plebiscite of townspeople, to pay trade union wages, and dispense with contracting.

aims, their methods, and their reasoning, are chiefly the result of their environment and local experiences. Thus they vote for laws to check the speculation in land, or the further selling of Crown lands, not as steps in a socialistic process conducting to State ownership of all land and capital, but because bitter experience has taught them that free trade in land means land monopoly, and that land monopoly congests cities and stops progress. They support compulsory arbitration and other regulating labour laws not as steps towards placing the instruments of production under State control, but in order that workers may obtain, by peaceful and regular methods, a little more than a living wage, and the barbarism of strike and lock-out be abolished. The cheap money laws are passed not to begin the abolition of private money-lending, but to provide the tillers of the soil with capital at more reasonable rates than the loan company, the lawyer, and the commission agent have hitherto charged him. Progressive taxes are laid on not as a foretaste of the confiscation of riches, but to make wealth bear its fair share of public burdens, and to stimulate the subdivision of large holdings.[1] Governmental as he is, the Labour politician is at heart more of a trade unionist than a conscious socialist, and the middle-class Progressive is still half a Liberal. Ask either of them whether he aims at socialising land and capital, and the odds are that he will reply that he

[1] "Les partis ouvriers d'Australasie ressemblent au trade unionisme par leur charpente composée de syndicats, par leur caractère exclusivement pratique, par leur programme de réformes menues et immediatement réalisables, par la rareté et le vague de leur déclarations socialistes et des principes généraux. D'autre part ils ressemblent à nos groupements socialistes par leur organisations en parti politique spécial laquelle n'exist en Angleterre qu'à l'état de projet fort discuté. En apparence ils sont ce qu'on appelle chez nous *un parti de classe* menant la lutte contre les bourgeois ; en réalité ils acceptent le patronat, le salariat, et cherchent simplement à s'assures de bonnes conditions de travail dans le monde tel qu'il est."—Métin, *Le Socialisme sans Doctrines*, p. 75.

does not trouble his head about such a goal. He certainly does not dream of achieving it by revolution in his own time. He accepts the wages system, rent and interest, private ownership, private enterprise. His business is to obtain tolerable conditions for the masses, and to stand by the small man wherever the small man is not a petty, cutting employer. The steady support which he gives to land laws, the object of which is to create peasant proprietors, freeholders or holding land at an unchangeable quit rent, the votes which he gives for land taxes from which small holdings are exempt, would startle German socialists and American single-taxers. There are, of course, Progressives in the colonies who know quite enough of economics to be aware that the remarkable extension of the State's functions which has gone on for a generation cannot continue at its present pace for another generation without profoundly affecting colonial society, and they welcome the prospect. M. Métin has cleverly summed up the colonial Progressive movement as *Le Socialisme sans Doctrines*. Like most apt epigrams, this nickname must be accepted with qualifications. When democrats in the colonies repudiate the title of socialists, it may mean merely that they do not know what experimental socialism is; but it may also mean that they are not Revolutionary Socialists, and truly they are not.

To express the kind of profession of faith to which most of them would subscribe is not easy; to do so in two or three sentences is hard. They look upon their colonies as co-operative societies of which they, men and women, are shareholders, while the governments are elective boards of directors. They believe that by co-operative action through the State they can compete with trusts and other organisations of capital abroad,

and dispense with great companies and corporations within their own borders. They see in their half-empty territories undeveloped estates which require capital as well as labour to work them. Either this capital must be obtained and used by the community or the financiers will exploit land and labour both. If the small man is to exist, it must be in union with his fellows: otherwise he will be crushed in these days of giant combinations. American individualism has produced Frick, Rockefeller, and Pierpont Morgan, also Tammany, the slums and rookeries of New York, and the mortgaged farmers of the West. Therefore, say the Australians, we will not trust to the competition in which the political economists trusted. We will try something else. The State is showing that it can undertake task after task, much to the benefit of society. We will go on enlarging its functions. Mistakes may be made, but we can restrain the State. Trusts and combines we might not be able to control. Moreover, newspapers criticise the public service in a way in which they will not or dare not criticise private enterprise. State management, therefore, carries with it the great guarantee of publicity.

If, then, colonial Progressives do not concern themselves with the visionary benefits or theoretical dangers of some perfectly organised socialist community, it is because they are too busy in seeing what they can make State energy do for them in experiments which have a definite purpose of immediate usefulness.

It is true that the *Worker*, the newspaper whose slashing articles speak for the Queensland Labour party, has for its motto "Socialism in our Time." But in a review of its own and its party's position, printed as long ago as December 1895, the *Worker* found it

necessary to explain away any suggestion of revolutionary propaganda:—

> We plead with the people not to be led away by the extravagant interpretation put upon our methods and speeches by the opponents of reform of any and all kinds.
>
> . . . . . .
>
> We do not ask that all our political programme should be set in operation at once by a single parliament. We know that cannot be, such a thing being contrary to the laws of evolution and that spirit of compromise which is said to be civilisation. Because we range ourselves under the flag of "Socialism in our Time," we cannot expect to realise a perfect collectivist State in our day any more than the follower of Christ can hope to establish in his time on earth peace, good-will toward men.

Interesting as it is to trace the aims and guiding principles of the various Progressive parties in the colonies, it is of far more importance to examine their actions. Hazy and half-inarticulate as their speakers so often seem when groping after general principles of policy, crude or careless as they appear on the rare occasions when they touch on economics, there is no want of distinct purpose or practical skill in their acts. If their constructive legislators are not artists, they may at least claim to be handy men. Their expositions of social requirements and economic possibilities may often lack finish; but when face to face with a demand for reforms from which well-read but dawdling pedants in other countries shrink, they have the boldness to go forward and the knack of doing work that will serve its purpose. Colonists are used to find themselves in odd plights. They are men of their hands, used to making shifts, inventing devices, getting out of scrapes, and confronting the unexpected. Something of this handiness and readiness in emergencies is found in their politicians. Their laws and adminis-

trative expedients may often seem as rough-and-ready as Robinson Crusoe's make-shifts—but somehow they usually work.

As already said, there were Radicals in Australia and New Zealand before 1890. The difficulty was to combine them in permanent parties. Their electoral and land reforms, their excellent views on direct taxes and State education, were hardly enough for the daily food of a people's party in communities where privileged orders, social castes, and political bondage scarcely existed. Politically the masses were enfranchised. What was wanted was a large purpose, a gospel which could stir them with enthusiasm. This stimulus was found in industrial democracy. The coming of organised Labour into politics in the years between 1890 and 1893 did not mean merely that work-people were bestirring themselves to obtain certain reforms. Half its significance and force sprang from its being a new departure in the matter of men as well as of measures. Up to 1890 Labour had been content to vote for middle-class candidates. In that year it decided to send into Parliament, not a few units of its own class, but bands of workers. A rapid growth of trade unions in the eighties had taught colonial Labour the strength of organisation. The success of the German Socialists at the polls, and the loud declarations in England in favour of an Independent Labour movement, were heard of in the colonies. A wave of socialistic feeling swept over them. In 1889 every one was reading collectivist tracts and listening to altruistic sermons. Trade Unionists were not by any means the only colonists who sent money home to help the London dockers. And when the dockers won their

strike, middle-class men and women in Australia and New Zealand rejoiced as over a victory for the cause of humanity. Philanthropists and politicians joined in exposing the beginnings of sweating in the clothing and other trades in certain of the larger towns, and newspapers owned by capitalists lent their help in the good work.

The maritime strike of 1890 dissipated many bright visions of peaceful co-operation between Labour and middle-class altruism. Many who had toyed with socialism, many who were not insincere in their friendship for Unionism, shrank from allies whose war upon "free" labour had consequences disturbing to industry and disastrous to themselves. The violence which in the next year stained the shearers' strike in Queensland made the feeling of revulsion stronger still. But while the conflicts of Capital and Labour of the years from 1890 to 1894 helped to isolate Labour politically, they also made the Unionists more determined to exert themselves in the field of politics. All the strikes failed. In five years the employers won every fight in every colony. Droughts, the collapse of the Melbourne land boom, and, finally, the great bank panic of 1893, swelled the numbers of the unemployed to many thousands. In 1894 the gold discoveries in Western Australia began to relieve the congestion. But low prices and returns of drought continued to embarrass one or more of the Australian provinces; and, except in Sydney and its neighbourhood, in 1900 and 1901 the chances of industrial warfare were always against Labour. Its defeats in the decade 1890-1899 were many. This must be remembered when noting the intense and persevering political efforts of Labour and its allies. If they learned to distrust the old-fashioned

war policy of English Trade Unionists, it was because the knock-down blows of 1890 and 1891 were followed by other rough lessons. On the other hand, they soon had encouraging examples of what could be done at the ballot-box. In New Zealand the defeat of the maritime strikers in September 1890 was as complete as in Australia. But at the general election of December in that year an alliance of Progressives and Unionists won a notable victory. Up to that day the colony had but once in its history seen a Radical ministry in office, and that—Sir George Grey's—had been short-lived and impotent. The victory of 1890, then, was unexpected; it turned out to be lasting and fruitful. Its consequences are not yet to be measured; but for good or ill they have changed New Zealand. The effect of the Progressives' success was not, of course, foreseen, but in itself it was startling, and it certainly gave a fillip to the Labour politicians of Australia. True, the number of Labour members returned in New Zealand was but five, and they did not attempt to form a separate party. But fully twenty Progressives were generally pledged to the Labour programme, and most of the party owed their election to the Labour vote. One or two hesitating followers of Mr. Ballance had been cut out. The result was singular. Nothing could have been less theatrical than the entry of Labour into the New Zealand Parliament. To all appearance it merely meant that half-a-dozen quiet, attentive, business-like, well-mannered mechanics took their seats in the House of Representatives. The Labour members did not increase in numbers. Nor did they supply the Progressives with a policy. But the organised support which they and their unions gave the Radical leaders made all the difference. The Progressive leaders already

had a policy, and now this was carried through Parliament in a thorough, almost uncompromising fashion. It was as though the much-criticised Newcastle programme had been forced through in England in its entirety by a Liberal party, steadily backed up by Labour, and fiercely opposed by the larger land-owners, the financiers, the merchants, and the learned professions.

In Australia Labour's *début* was much more dramatic. At a general election held in New South Wales in mid-winter, 1895, thirty-five Labour members gained seats. They did not appear on the scene to play the useful but modest part of their congeners in New Zealand. They aspired to do in Sydney what Parnell's Irish had done at Westminster—to be a disciplined independent third party, holding the balance of power and giving support on business principles only. It is only right to say that through failure and success, through good and evil report, they have done this. At one moment they were split by the fiscal issue, for in New South Wales alone, amongst the seven colonies the battle of Free Trade and Protectionism was still a keen and not unequal tussle. Later on, the party was threatened with disruption during the Federal agitation; and it was repeatedly strained by disputes amongst its own members over points of discipline. Yet on the whole, it has succeeded in maintaining a very strict discipline, in almost always showing a united front, and in holding about one-fifth of the constituencies. Four governments in turn have leaned on its support; three have lost it and gone down; the fourth still enjoys it. If it cannot be said that the reforms secured by the Labour party during the first four or five years of its career were numerous it may be claimed that its leaders and

members have gradually learned their new trade, and have lately begun to gather the fruits of their strategy. They got nothing from Sir Henry Parkes, little from Sir George Dibbs, and not very much from Mr. Reid. But with the coming in of Sir William Lyne and Mr. See their harvest began. Their own view of their record may be gathered from a speech made in 1901 by their leader, Mr. M'Gowen :—

> While they were with a Government as a third party they were not necessarily of the Government. The argument that they could not maintain their position as a third party had perforce had to die. It might be, as some said, that in a few years there would be only two parties, but there would be no doubt of the Liberalism and Radicalism of any body that the Labour party blended with. ("Hear, hear.") The methods of the Labour party were at first laughed to scorn, but as a matter of fact they had been copied, and indeed some of the parties were now sighing for such a thing as the solidarity pledge in the case of unselected candidates, who refused to stand down. It was said that they had no constructive ability, but there had been considerable reconstruction in the day-labour system having been substituted for the contract system. (Applause.) If there was any truth in this criticism of the Labour party it was strange that a great many of the planks of their platform had during the last ten years been placed upon the statute-book of New South Wales. ("Hear, hear.") The party supported the Parkes Government for the first plank in the platform, and not getting it turned that government out, and during the two years that support was given to the Dibbs Government, they obtained the one man one vote law —since improved, and now the best electoral law in the world (cheers), the Mining on Private Lands Act, and the Voluntary Arbitration and Conciliation Court—a measure useful only in so far as it proved that the voluntary principle was ineffectual. ("Hear, hear.") From the Reid Government the party extorted land value and income taxation and a Public Service Act; and it was owing to the persistent advocacy of the Labour party that Mr. Reid initiated the day-labour system. They knew well that if between 1891 and 1894 the Labour party had done nothing else than force the adoption of the day-labour system the party would

have justified its existence. In the eighteen months during which the party stood behind the Lyne Government they received further concessions, which amply justified the party's action in voting Mr. Reid from power. ("Hear, hear.") The Lyne Government gave an Early Closing Bill, an Old Age Pension Bill (cheers), and, under the reign of Mr. E. W. O'Sullivan in the works department, there had been a vast extension of the day-labour and minimum wages. (Cheers.) "It would never have been possible to have introduced the day-labour principle had it not been for the presence and assistance of the Labour party," said Mr. Reid in the course of a speech; and speaking at the last day-labour demonstration Mr. O'Sullivan said, "It would not have been possible for me to have given effect to the recognised principles of trades unionism had it not been for the presence of the Labour party." Then again there were the Miners Accident Relief Act, the Navigation Act, the City Council Act.

To this catalogue may now be added Mr. Wise's Compulsory Arbitration Act.

The story of the Labour party of Queensland is at once more picturesque and more pathetic than that just told. It sprang into existence—the expression is merely accurate—in troubled times. Since self-government was given to Australia no colony has ever been rent by industrial strife and class bitterness as Queensland was rent in the years of strain, from 1890 to 1893. Elsewhere there were gusts of passionate feeling; in Queensland there was repeated disorder, armed conflict, and a nervous dread of a general upheaval. The fear was exaggerated, but there was quite enough disorder during the shearers' strikes to justify nervousness. A strike of town artizans may possibly give the police cause for watchfulness. A strike of a class so formidable and so difficult to coerce as the bushworkers of Queensland is a much graver matter. Fortunately, though they are keen politicians, they are not revolutionaries. What, however, with the "Socialism in Our Time," preached

by their organ, *The Worker;* what with the communism believed in by their prophet William Lane; what with the violent words of some of their spokesmen and the violent acts of some of their strikers,—it is not wonderful that the bushworkers managed to scare their fellow colonists badly. So the Labour party, which entered the Lower House in Brisbane by capturing fifteen seats in 1893, while the country was in the throes of the industrial conflict, has never yet been able to secure power. Its aim has been ambitious. Its members have not tried to spur a Progressive party as in New Zealand, or even to hold the balance of power by opportunist tactics as in New South Wales. They aimed at superseding all other opposition to the dominant Conservative party, and did so. They became the Opposition,—and they have remained the Opposition for ten years. Only for a moment in December 1899 did they gain office; and then their leader, Mr. Dawson, formed a ministry to be ousted in less than a week. If, though in opposition, they had been able to secure reform by moral pressure, they might have little to regret in their exclusion from office. But there has been less Radical and Socialistic reform in Queensland during the last dozen years than in any of the important colonies. A good Factories and Shops Act is almost the only important concession to which the workers can point. State socialism in Queensland has taken the dubious form of financing companies. The Labour party has not lost ground in the country; it holds eight seats more than it held in 1893. Admittedly the course before the Labour members when first elected was far from clear. The leaders of the older parties had coalesced against them, and offered Socialism-cum-Labour an uncompromising resistance. In New South Wales the spectacle in 1891 was of two

evenly-balanced parties touting unblushingly for the Labour vote. In New Zealand a successful Progressive party was ready to pass a programme at which Labour would have been silly to cavil. In Queensland an alarmed and exasperated capitalist party held office with a majority too strong to shake,—and their middle-class Liberal opponents were but a pitiful remnant. In this difficult plight the Labour party made three main mistakes. They did not disavow heartily or unitedly the crimes of certain of the strikers of 1893; and they were often obstructive, turgid, abusive, and long-winded in parliament. Their organ, *The Worker*, neutralised the courage and unquestionable ability of much of its writing by using wild words. Finally, instead of cultivating an alliance with the fragments of middle-class Liberalism left in parliament, the Labour party ostentatiously neglected it. Thus, though the case for reform is at least as strong in Queensland as in any other colony; though the budgets of the years between the heavy deficit of 1889 and the heavy deficit of 1901 show little trace of strength or statesmanship; and though, in spite of their initial blunders, the Labour members command the sympathy of a full half of the adult white population—their record is as yet comparatively barren. By all accounts they are learning wisdom by experience, and are now showing some parliamentary capacity. So long, however, as they lie open to the charge of trying to represent only one class in the community, they are likely to be excluded from office. The day is far off when any colony will consciously allow a single class—even the largest—to govern it.

In South Australia the Labour party, which was formed in the months following the maritime strike, contrived, during its first two years, to secure twelve

seats in the Lower and six in the Upper Chamber—about a fourth, that is to say, of what was then the strength of the local parliament. Their victories in the Upper House were remarkable, because that Chamber, though elective, is chosen by a property franchise. Labour's successes in South Australia were chiefly owing to friendly co-operation with the strong Radical party ably led by Kingston, Cockburn, and Holder. When acting together, as they usually did in a fairly amiable spirit, the allies were able to pass a number of measures to which I shall refer later on. The Labour members, however, did not become simply a section of the Progressive party. They retained their separate organisation, and even passed a resolution disqualifying all persons other than manual workers from being chosen as Labour candidates. In their earlier years they were well led by a printer named M'Pherson, a man of sterling character as well as intelligence. His death was a blow to them, and since his loss they have declined in strength. But, though they now hold but five seats out of forty-two in the Lower House, and but two in the Upper, they have gained solid returns for their support.

The history of the Labour movement in Victoria is much the same as its history in South Australia. Curiously enough, if we remember the strength of Victorian trade unionism in the eighties, the numbers of the Victorian trade members have always been few. They number but seven in a Lower House of ninety-five members. Strong in Melbourne, Labour is weaker in rural Victoria than in the country constituencies of Queensland and New South Wales. Moreover the Victorian elective Upper House is at once the most difficult to assail and the most conservative Chamber in

Australia. On that fortress Labour has at present made no impression whatever. Yet if the Victorian Labour politicians have done nothing else, they have fully justified their existence by helping to obtain the well-known Factories and Shops Act of 1896. This, containing as it does the principle of State regulation of wages as well as hours, is one of the most remarkable experiments on any statute book. For the rest, the Labour men may claim that, in the absence of any very vigorous or well-defined Progressive party in their colony, they have done what they could with the followings of Sir George Turner and Mr. Peacock.

In Western Australia and Tasmania the absence of any developed factory system and of any complete organisation of pastoral workmen has helped to keep Labour as yet in the background of politics. Yet even in these colonies it is making itself felt as a force; in both it has affected the Federal elections; and there is ample evidence that the West Australian artizans and miners are likely to take their full share in directing affairs at Perth.

Excluding the two smaller colonies just mentioned, we see, then, that, in the other five, Labour parties have played important but different parts. The extremes are found in New Zealand and Queensland. In the one Labour was absorbed in a Progressive party whose leaders were ready to give it, not all it asked, but more than its more sober members hoped to obtain. In Queensland Labour has almost displaced middle-class Radicalism. In New South Wales, South Australia, and Victoria, it has not been absorbed, nor has it supplanted any *bourgeois* party. It has remained organised and distinct. But in South Australia and Victoria it has maintained more or less friendly relations with the same set of middle-class politicians. In New South

Wales it has first supported and then abandoned government after government, after treating them to displays of candid friendship which sometimes led to outbursts of bitter and undignified wrangling. For the last three years the Labour members at Sydney have, it would seem, seen their way to show some real confidence in the Lyne and See ministries. At any rate their alliance seems closer than with any previous Cabinet, and their tone less hectoring and more cordial. The position in the Sydney Parliament is for the nonce very much what it was in Adelaide when, between 1892 and 1897, M'Pherson and his friends worked in harmony with Kingston and Cockburn. The Sydney Labour men certainly cannot complain that the result of their modified tactics has been unprofitable. Contrasting, then, the outcome of the direct representation of Labour for ten years in five parliaments, we find it clear enough that the experiment has been fruitful or unfruitful, according as Labour has been able to find a *bourgeois* Progressive section to work with, and has been willing to work with it. In New Zealand, where the Liberal-Labour alliance amounted to a fusion, the crop of Progressive measures has been the largest. But then the New Zealand Liberals had leaders in 1891 who were capable of thinking out a policy and ready and willing to go further than any responsible Australian politicians could or would then go. It does not follow that the Australian Labour sections would have found New Zealand tactics produce New Zealand results. It is not even certain that there may not yet be a distinct Labour party in New Zealand.

Since the earlier months of 1901 Australia has witnessed a new phenomenon—Labour in a Federal Parliament. In the first elections of the Commonwealth

Labour, thanks to the prohibition of plural voting, captured more than one-fifth of the seats, sixteen out of seventy-five in the House of Representatives, and eight out of thirty-six in the Senate. The result was surprising, and to many observers far from pleasant. Had a middle-class coalition been practicable the Labour successes might have been barren; but for many reasons, among which were strong personal antipathies, a coalition was out of the question. There was acute feeling on the fiscal question, and the Free-trade minority was strong enough to enable Labour to hold the balance. All depended upon the solidarity of the Labour men. They might have split on the fiscal issue in Melbourne as the New South Wales Labour party had once split. They did not repeat this mistake, but gave a general support to the Protectionist tariff, merely taking opportunity when it offered to reduce duties which seem obviously likely to weigh upon the working classes. In other ways they have already left their mark on the first volume of the Commonwealth's Statute Book. Their leader, Mr. Watson, and those who advise him are in tactical skill a generation ahead of the raw novices who led labour into the battle-field ten years ago. They are politicians, and so far are playing their cards well. Their aims and gains in their first year are thus summed up by their secretary, Senator Stewart, who makes these claims on their behalf—

> With regard to the solidarity of the party, of that there need be no doubt. We number sixteen in the House of Representatives and eight in the Senate, and where we throw our weight victory lies. The politicians of the old school are, of course, disgusted at this state of affairs, but, apart from the Labour party, there is a strong Democratic contingent in the Federal Parliament, and which, I may say, is not at all displeased at the commanding position we occupy. Just think of what we have accomplished in a few short

months. We have passed a measure which, if not going so far as I would like, will yet, if honestly administered, put a virtual stop to the immigration of Asiatics, whether British subjects or otherwise. Is that not something to be proud of? Then we have dealt with the sugar industry, and so liberally that none but the most bigoted kanakaphile can complain. I am astonished at the magnanimous treatment accorded to this industry by the Australian people. Again, there is the prohibition of coloured labour on mail boats, and the fixing of a minimum wage in the Public Service Bill. We have also done our best to promote economy, but have not been so successful in this direction as we could wish.

A readjustment of the burden of taxation is one of the Labour party's planks, and it has been kept constantly in view. The result will be, I think, that for the future Mr. Fatman will contribute more largely to our revenue than he has been accustomed to do in the past. Our influence, too, in putting a brake on military expenditure has been most marked. The party is unanimous in support of a citizen army, and in reducing our permanent paid forces to the lowest possible minimum. I expect that a Federal franchise law will be passed during the present session, and that a Conciliation and Arbitration Act will be placed on the statute-book in the very near future. Having disposed of these, the party will be free to tackle what, after a White Australia, is probably the most important question that remains within the scope of the Federation—viz. a Federal Old Age Pension scheme. There are difficulties in the way, no doubt, but where there's a will there's a way.

When, in the years after the maritime strike, band after band of raw mechanics and labourers laid down their tools and walked into parliament, class feeling ran so high in the colonies, and the unrest caused by the strikes was still so widely felt, that it is not surprising that the new apparition caused real uneasiness. The Labour members had served no apprenticeship to their novel trade. How long would they take to learn it? Would they seriously try to learn it? Some of them had talked turgidly enough at the meetings. There were onlookers who prophesied that the legislative

halls would be filled with a veritable rout of Comus. Respectable colonists felt somewhat as strait-laced New Englanders are said to have felt when Andrew Jackson, with his mob of wire-pullers and office-seekers at his heels, descended upon Washington and entered the White House in triumph. Fortunately the unions and Labour leagues had, as a rule, shown judgment in choosing their candidates, and where they chose badly the constituencies sometimes showed the selective sense they had failed to exhibit. The first Labour members to be elected were a respectable body. They revealed no unsuspected stores of brilliancy. But they were by no means the worst men in any House they entered. They took themselves and their duties seriously, and, thanks to their Trade Union training, displayed several of the virtues which are usually considered the special attributes of the middle-class. Thus they were sober,[1] punctual in attendance, painstaking in the study of their business, and, at first at any rate, mercifully inclined to brevity of speech. Sir Henry Parkes wrote in the *Contemporary Review* of February 1892 an account of his impressions of the New South Welsh Labour men on their *début*. Wily opportunist as the old Parkes had become, the young Parkes had fought for Labour, had been of it as well as for it, and knew by cruel experience how hard is the lot of the poor even in lands where the sun warms them. And it was with a knowledge of his subject that he wrote—

> In Australia the majority in every parliament is composed of men who have had to force their own way in the world, and who ought to be well acquainted with the condition of the working

[1] In 1893 the Queensland Labour members, seventeen in number, were all total abstainers. One of the paragraphs in a Labour party manifesto now before me advises electors to vote for none but sober candidates.

population; but it is not often the case that the man who mounts upward by his own energy and perseverance in industrial pursuits bestows much thought upon his fellows who are less successful in the struggle. It is flattering to his self-love to think that his prosperity is due to his own merits, and he displays a pride in his possessions which it is not always pleasant to look upon. He is too busy with himself, and what is his, to trouble about the welfare of others. Let them do as he has had to do. But the men elected, not because they have emerged from the ranks of Labour, but because they are of the ranks of Labour, and whose mission is to labour in Parliament for labour's sake, are not likely to place any object above the improvement of the condition of their own class.

On the whole the experience of eleven years has verified the prediction. All the Labour members have not maintained the self-restraint and earnestness which marked them in their first session. Familiarity with parliament has sometimes bred contempt, and some Labour men have turned out noisy and empty enough. Yet if they have not raised the tone of any assembly they have certainly nowhere lowered it. They are not corrupt,[1] and treachery amongst them is rare. Of

[1] I am aware that a well-known London journalist who was one of the writers to voyage round the colonies in the *Ophir* has written of corruption as a feature of Australian politics. What opportunities this gentleman could have had of studying the question during the Royal tour I am unable to conceive. Let me, however, quote on the other side the testimony of another English visitor to the Antipodes, a competent witness, Mr. Sidney Webb, who was at some pains to inquire into the Australian and New Zealand politics in 1898. This is what he thought of them:—

In politics Australia is emphatically un-American. American municipal government, for example, is unspeakably corrupt—worse, far worse than is commonly reported. Australian municipal government, though far behind our own in efficiency, is as pure as that of the purest English city. The same personal integrity runs through all Australian politics. Australian civil servants are as honest as our own. Australian Premiers all die poor. Australian Legislatures, imperfect as they are in many ways, are absolutely un-American in this respect. In the clubs, and at the tables of the rich, it is the fashion—a silly and ignorant fashion—to run down the politician and to regard the Members of the Legislature as a low lot, guilty of any amount of corruption as well as of the worse crime of bad manners. But one finds on inquiry that no personal dishonesty, bribery, or malversation is so much as alleged. It never occurs, even to the most prejudiced squatter at the Melbourne Club, to assume that the ignorant demagogue of a politician whom he is denouncing is taking bribes from a tramway company or selling concessions to the highest bidder

course they are jealously watched by their brother-workers outside, some of whom are always ready to find fault with them savagely. Though, however, Labour has its feuds, and though in these its most faithful servants are sometimes attacked with unreasoning malignity, it maintains a surprising amount of solidarity outside as well as inside parliament. The older trade unions are not always as keen politicians as, for instance, are the bushworkers. But when election time comes they commonly fall into line. The organisations often support middle-class candidates, but almost always do so reluctantly and with suspicion. A political Labour Conference held in Sydney in February 1902 resolved that henceforth no one should be nominated to stand as a Labour candidate who had not belonged to some union or Labour league for twelve months. Especial complaint was made of the selection of "two publicans and a lawyer" for urban constituencies in 1891. On the other hand, Mr. Hughes, a noted Labour politician and speaker, said, in a speech made in Sydney in 1896, that the Labour party, though not representing all classes, did claim to represent the producers and earners. They claimed to represent merchants, clerks, and farmers, as well as labourers—"that is to say, 96 per cent of the people, rich and poor." It is, indeed, the claim of Labour politicians that their policy is framed in the interests of almost all in the community except financiers, money-lenders,

—practices that are unfortunately common forms in Chicago or New York. The worst that Australian fashionable society finds to say about its enemy, the politician, is that he "panders to the Labour vote," and that he gets railways and water-works made in his own constituency, instead of, as in the old days, making things pleasant for the squatters, and arranging the public works as the squatters desired. Of rotation of office and the domination of the "party machine"—of "boss-rule" and "spoil to the victors" in the American sense—there is, from one end of Australia to the other, not a trace or a symptom. Australian politics and Australian governments are very far from perfect, but their faults and their virtues are utterly unlike the faults and the virtues of America.

rentiers, and land monopolists. To suggest, however, that they have tried to include workers and producers of all classes in their political organisation, and that they have overcome all distrust of middle-class Progressives, would be to credit them with much too catholic a spirit.

Old-world students, accustomed to live in societies where workmen are supposed to leave Parliament to their betters, may be advised to clear their heads of a good deal of cheap sneering which they may have seen printed in depreciation of colonial Labour parties. Serious as are the faults which I have already admitted, no party ought to be judged by its worst men. And the better Labour members are not ignorant now, whatever they were a dozen years ago. Nor could any one now truly apply to their regiments Champion's scornful words of 1890, "lions led by asses." A very critical Sydney correspondent of the London *Times* (4th April 1902) candidly confesses :

> It must not be supposed that the crusaders are a rabble of ignorant demagogues. Payment of members has made a seat in Parliament very desirable, and so great is the competition that only the keenest-witted men get to the front, and the Labour party in the Australian Parliament contains some of the best read and most able politicians in the House.

These sentences which, by the way, are a commentary on payment of members, may be read with the following from the Sydney *Daily Telegraph*, a newspaper which assuredly is not an organ of Labour, but which, speaking of the Labour Conference held in its colony in 1902, says :

> The debating power of the conference was surprisingly high. In this respect it is doubtful if a similarly representative lay body drawn from the ranks of the other two political parties in the State

would have done better, if as well. The average delegate to the conference may be a seaman or a hod-carrier, or one of a dozen other things for a living, but he is almost invariably a politician by profession. He is always acquiring political information, and he is always debating political subjects. Politics being the only thing which permanently interests him, unlike the average business or professional man outside the sphere of public life, he has taken the trouble to formulate for himself a political creed based upon at least some sort of principle, and though the principle may be absurdly wrong, still he has thought so much round the thing, and has debated it so often, that as a rule he is argumentatively fortified against any but the most skilled attack. Reading largely economic text-books, he unconsciously acquires the habit of logical statement, which adds wonderfully to the effectiveness of his speaking. One of the most striking characteristics of the debates was the way in which the generality of delegates "stuck to the point." There were not attempts at "oratory." Remarkable also was the comparative absence of those cant phrases which not so long ago used to be almost as necessary to the Labour man's existence as bread. "The margin of cultivation" did not happen once, while there was not a single reference either to the "proletariat" or the "capitalist cormorant," and even the good old mouthful "State control of the instruments of production, distribution and exchange" was not put on service. Of course there remained a sacred few which can never be quite discarded. Chief of these is "capitalistic press."

Earlier in this chapter I touched upon the general principles which appear to underlie that ill-defined blend of Radicalism, Socialism, and Trade Unionism, the Progressive programme in Australia and New Zealand. And I suggested that it is of more use to examine what the Progressives have done than to try to define what they believe. Before coming to their manifestoes and acts, however, it may be asked whether they have any general aim which may be expressed in a sentence or two, and which their sheaves of proposals are expected to serve. Undoubtedly they have. It is to secure by combination and law a larger share of comfort

and opportunity for that great human mass which lives upon such stinted reward as Capital measures out to Labour day by day and month by month. It is to raise the standard of life among the workers, not only by gaining for them shorter hours and better pay, but by lifting them on to a higher plane by education and a civilised environment.[1] [2]

Next, in what practical ways does Labour propose to use the political machine to aid the masses in the pursuit of happiness. Here we come to programmes. Of these documents the Labour parties have been fertile enough. A mere reprint of those advertised since 1891 would fill a respectable volume. Long, ill-proportioned,

[1] He intended, with their assistance, to still fight along the lines of the only political party that had an ideal worth speaking of. (Cheers.) He had never minced words with regard to their Labour league. It had for its ideal the shortening of the hours of labour of the people in a civilised community, and giving them more opportunity of having leisure and pleasure in their lives. And when they realised that, at the best, life was only a mere passing existence, full of trouble and worry and cares, the more brightness they could instil into the individual lives of the members of the community, the better work they would do as the people of that community. (Cheers.) Another of their objects ever present was the fixing of a subsistence wage. When they contended that it was the duty of Parliament, by legislation, to so ordain that the people of the community should have more opportunity of enjoying what little pleasures there were in life, they, on the other hand, said that they wanted every man in the community—even if he brought only one talent to the service of his fellows—to have sufficient to live in happiness and comfort in that community of which he was a unit. ("Hear, hear.") That was the Labour party's reason for fixing a minimum wage. These were the two living principles of the Labour movement. —Speech of Mr. M'Gowen, leader of the New South Welsh Labour party, 1901.

[2] Having established themselves in power—actually in power, for though the Labour party strictly so-called has not a majority, yet labour interests control the Government—they have set before themselves a programme of legislation which has for its sole object the improvement of the conditions of life for the masses, and they have a belief in it which raises it to the dignity of a crusade. They may, like Samson in his blindness, pull down the social structure and overwhelm themselves in the ruins; but at least they must be credited with good intentions. The fight they are waging is a fight against the "iron law of wages"; they are setting themselves, by legislation and government interference, to keep up an artificial standard of comfort and prosperity. This, of course, has been tried before, but never by people who were so desperately in earnest, nor in circumstances like those prevailing in Australia.—Sydney Correspondent of the London *Times*, 4th April 1902.

and ambitious as these were at first, their framers have lately shown an encouraging tendency to recognise the limitations which hard realities impose on working politicians. In New South Wales in 1891, Labour provided its thirty-five representatives with a platform of sixteen planks. In less than three years afterwards "a fighting platform" was drawn up of half a dozen reforms to be worked for at once. The longer and more pretentious programme, though not abandoned, was relegated to the background.[1] In the same way the language of the Queenslanders is far less pretentious in 1902 than it was in 1893. Yet, though the earlier Labour programmes were mercilessly laughed at, and to some extent may have deserved ridicule, still, when we note how many of their demands have been obtained within twelve short years, we must admit that the laugh is now to a large extent on the side of the programme-framers. Clearly, they were not the bawling rabble of presumptuous meddlers which certain newspaper writers hastily took them to be. A substantial budget of their "insane" and "impossible" requests have been granted by communities which seem none the worse for the experiments. Others are now under discussion. A few only seem to have been dropped or forgotten.

The programmes show little originality; also, happily, not much sheer eccentricity. The items were borrowed from the middle-class colonial Progressives, from the London Fabians and the English land-reformers. If we try to sort them out under the heads of visionary and practical, we find that the latter

[1] The six planks of the reduced programme adopted in November 1893 were:—1. Land value taxation. 2. Mining on private property. 3. Abolition of the Upper House, and introduction of a Referendum. 4. Local government on a democrative basis. 5. A compulsory eight hours day. 6. A national bank.

preponderates. Examine a dozen Labour manifestoes; it is only here and there that you find such an article of faith as "the recognition in our legislative enactments of the natural and inalienable right of the whole community to the land—upon which all must live, and from which by labour all wealth is produced"; or "any measure that will secure for the wage-earner a fair and equitable return for his or her labour"; or "State department of Labour at which any man can apply for work at a minimum wage *as a right.*" The Queensland *Worker* asked amongst other things for free railways and the "taxation of every person according to his ability to pay." In all programmes a State bank of issue figured prominently. Secondary and university education was to be as free as primary already is. Amongst constitutional reforms the Swiss initiative and referendum were almost always included. The Queensland and New South Wales parties pronounced for the abolition of Upper Houses, and an elective magistracy was a plank in New South Wales. None of these large orders have been executed, though wages-boards and arbitration courts, the co-operative contract system of New Zealand, and the Government minimum wage in New South Wales, have done not a little to secure for work-people a fair and equitable return for their labour.

Yet Labour, though at the outset it claimed much which has not been granted, and certain things which it would have been folly to grant, could be business-like and could take short views. Quite a number of items in its first programmes might have been assented to by respectable English Liberals. Such were a request for doing away with custom duties on tea, coffee, cocoa, and kerosene, and putting on a land-tax to make up any consequent loss of revenue; another for the in-

spection of dangerous machinery; a third for the better protection of miners and the appointment of workmen inspectors. Others again were the abolition of plural voting and the shutting up of public-houses on polling day; decentralisation and rating on ground values. A Factories and Workshops Act was called for (and with ample reason) in New South Wales, and in the same colony it was suggested that the small paid defence force should be disbanded, and the protection of the community left altogether to volunteers. To the request for an eight hours day Queensland and Victoria added the significant words "where practicable." None of the platforms, be it noted, had in them any suggestion of hostility to Australian federation. The New South Welshmen, however, in 1891, required it to be on "a national and not an Imperialist basis." The Victorians some years later stipulated that it should be discussed at a national convention, and adopted or rejected by popular vote. This is exactly what was done. The Queensland organisations wanted the wiping out of all conspiracy laws specially aimed at trade unionists. In New South Wales and Queensland the fiscal issue was declared to be an open question; in the other colonies the workers were for the most part on the Protectionist side, as they still are, except on the West Australian gold-fields. In all colonies Labour was favourable to State arbitration in industrial disputes, and to the creation of a Ministry of Labour.[1]

[1] As an example of the demands of a representative Labour body to-day I give the Federal and State platforms of the Victorian Political Labour Council, issued in Melbourne in April 1902. It will be noted that the chief items are much the same as those which figure in the programmes of 1890-93 :—

FEDERAL PLATFORM

(*a*) One adult one vote.
(*b*) Amendment of the Constitution providing for the initiative and the national referendum.

Most of the proposals in the last paragraph would, I suppose, appeal more or less to English Progressives. Other planks in the programmes might not. The spirit of colonial Protectionism was embodied in the demand that all Government contracts should be carried out within the colony—an impossibility. All the programmes flatly declared against permitting Chinese or Asiatic immigrants to enter Australia. In Queensland, where State immigration from the mother country was still being carried on, Labour pronounced against it. The South Australians wanted further land grants to syndicates prohibited; the Victorians asked for an absentee tax.

What portion of these schemes of reform have the alliances or fusions of Radical and Labour groups been able to secure? That is the business of this book to show. This will be a convenient place in which to summarise the legislative work of the last twelve years. Before doing so, let me once again warn the student not

(*c*) Exclusion of undesirable races.
(*d*) Old-age pensions.
(*e*) Uniform industrial legislation.
(*f*) Gradual nationalisation of the means of production, distribution, and exchange.
(*g*) Fiscal question—All candidates in the Labour interest must be pledged to the new Protectionist policy.

STATE PLATFORM

(*a*) One adult one vote.
(*b*) Initiative and referendum.
(*c*) The establishment of a State bank.
(*d*) The establishment of a Department of Labour, with a responsible Minister.
(*e*) The legalising of the eight-hour system and a minimum wage for all workers.
(*f*) The establishment by law of Courts of compulsory arbitration between employers and *employés*.
(*g*) The maintenance and extension of technical education by the State.
(*h*) Free, primary, secondary, and university education, with all necessary requisites provided by the State.
(*i*) Progressive tax on land values, town and country, without exemptions, exclusive of improvement.
(*j*) The sustaining of village settlements and the creation of small landholders under a system of perpetual lease, with periodical valuations.
(*k*) No further alienation of Crown land.
(*l*) Pensions for all aged and disabled persons.
(*m*) A cumulative tax on all incomes over £200 per year.
(*n*) Reform of the State Constitution.

to assume that the output of reform and experiment I am about to describe has been all, or nearly all, the product of the Labour parties. With some of it they have had little or nothing to do; most of it they have supported and helped on. A number of noteworthy measures they have forced to the front, but, though many important details are their handiwork altogether, few measures are theirs *ab origine*.

Among recent constitutional changes the chief is one with which Progressives, as such, had nothing whatever to do. This is the federation of the six Australian colonies, accomplished on the 1st of January 1901. There are students to whom the grant of the Parliamentary franchise to the women of New South Wales, New Zealand, South Australia, and Western Australia, and the right given to Australian women generally to vote in the Federal elections, are not less interesting than federation. The abolition of plural voting in New South Wales, and of the entire property qualification in New Zealand, has been capped by the abolition of plural voting in all Australian Federal elections, even those of Senators. Generally threats and attacks directed against the Second Chambers in the various colonies have been abortive. In the case of the New Zealand Legislative Council, however, nomination for seven years has taken the place of nomination for life. In Western Australia the franchise has been widened, and a measure of power given to the gold-fields. Tasmania in 1896 decided to give a trial to preferential voting. Though the system tried can scarcely be said to have failed, it was abandoned in 1901. Queensland, in 1891, adopted and still uses the "contingent vote," a plan designed to secure the advantage of a second ballot without the delay or cost thereof.

Though the colonies began to manage their own affairs just when free trade was in the full tide of triumph in the mother country, all but one of them had in 1890 set up Protectionist customs tariffs. The exception, New South Wales, was captured by the Protectionists under Sir George Dibbs in 1891. They failed to hold it, however; and in 1895 Mr. George Reid passed in Sydney the nearest approach to a scientific free trade tariff which has ever been law in Australia. Six years later federation brought the Protectionists their revenge, and in 1901 Sydney ceased to be a free port. In 1891 the South Australians amended their land tax by making it mildly progressive. In the same year a more severe progressive land tax was imposed in New Zealand; also an income tax, graduated so as to fall more heavily upon companies and larger incomes than upon the men of narrower means. Victoria, which has levied a land tax since 1878, imposed an income tax in 1895. In the same year Mr. Reid laid land and income taxes on New South Wales. Queensland in 1891 and New Zealand in 1896 gave power to local bodies to levy rates on ground-values.

In all the colonies the State remains the chief landlord, and the management and disposal of the vast public estate has led to the creation of a large and intricate branch of law and administration. In the effort to discourage land monopoly and promote closer settlement, most of the colonies, after disastrous experiences of free trade in land, have adopted, more or less partially and timidly, various systems of leasing in perpetuity. The South Australian system (1888), those of New Zealand (1882 and 1892), and that of New South Wales (1895), are most worthy of attention.

Attempts have also been made to plant small allotment holders on public land in groups called village settlements. In some colonies the experiment has gone the length of giving these village settlements a co-operative or communistic complexion, but co-operative communities have entirely failed. Where, however, the separate allotment system has been adhered to in South Australia, New Zealand, and Victoria, a good measure of success has been met with. Village settlements are a creation of the last seventeen years.

Beginning with 1892, a series of laws have been adopted in New Zealand (1892 and 1894), Queensland (1894), Western Australia (1896), Victoria (1897), South Australia (1898), and New South Wales (1901), empowering the State to repurchase private land for subdivision into small farms. The New Zealand law is peculiar in authorising compulsory acquisition where owners refuse to sell or the Government thinks that a bargain in not likely to be arranged. Another set of enactments beginning with 1894 provides for State money-lending on mortgage. Here New Zealand and Western Australia led the way, followed by South Australia, Victoria, Tasmania, and New South Wales. The Tasmanian Act has been inoperative, and New South Wales only lends money to Crown tenants. In yet another direction the Governments have tried to come to the help of their settlers. Departments of agriculture have been founded. By teaching, experimental farming, inspecting and sometimes grading meat, butter, cheese, and hemp, importing pedigree stock, providing cold storage, stamping out noxious weeds and diseases, and pushing trade in England and South Africa, these departments have admittedly done effective work. Victoria helped to build up a butter export trade by granting a bonus on

it for some years. Everywhere the State railways are managed with a view to promote settlement and production.

There are local option laws on the statute books of all the colonies except Tasmania and Western Australia. By far the most stringent of these is the "Alcoholic Liquors Control Act" passed in New Zealand in 1893, and amended in 1895. The divorce laws of New South Wales, Victoria, and New Zealand are more advanced than those of Great Britain or the other colonies. Marriage with a deceased wife's sister is legal. Victoria and New Zealand have limited the right of testamentary disposition by withholding from the head of a family complete power to disinherit wife and children.

The exclusion of undesirable immigrants has been aimed at by most colonial Parliaments for many years. The Chinese have been especially marked out, and a long list of measures passed to restrict their entry. New South Wales in 1888 and New Zealand in 1896 imposed a landing-tax on them of as much as £100 a man. The Parliament of the Commonwealth decided in 1901 to insist on a reading and writing test to which all immigrants must submit. New Zealand and several colonies had already enacted similar laws, all based upon an Immigration Act of the colony of Natal. In 1901 a law of the Commonwealth forbade the further introduction of Kanaka labourers, or their employment in the sugar-fields of Queensland after five years from the date of the enactment.

The exclusion laws, inasmuch as they are chiefly, though not entirely, aimed at shutting out cheap foreign labour, may be treated as a part of the remarkable body of regulative enactments which deal with

employment in the Commonwealth and New Zealand, and which help to distinguish the spirit of these democracies from that of countries like Canada and parts of the United States. While to a large extent the Labour laws, as they are called, may be compared in kind with statutes in force elsewhere, they are not matched elsewhere in their number, boldness, and stringency. In New Zealand, which in this department of experiment still outstrips her neighbours, the Labour laws are numerous and complex enough to wear the aspect of a code, the parts of which are designed to fit into one other. Undoubtedly the two most striking—and to old-fashioned economists heretical—of colonial regulative laws are the Industrial Arbitration Act of New Zealand (passed in 1894 and expanded in 1900), and the system of wages boards set up in Melbourne under the Victorian Factories and Shops Act (enacted in 1896 and expanded three years afterwards). The former has been adopted (with alterations) by New South Wales and Western Australia; the latter in modified form has been transplanted to South Australia. Stringent factory laws are administered in New Zealand, Victoria, Queensland, and South Australia; the New South Welsh Act is looser. Early closing in shops is enforced in all the Australian colonies except Tasmania. New Zealand also has a shopping Act which indirectly brings about early closing, and in that colony banks and merchants' offices must close at 5 P.M. on three-fourths of the evenings in each month. South Australia and New Zealand have adopted more or less altered versions of the English Workmen's Compensation Act. Nothing in the various colonial laws relating to truck and Employers' Liability will strike English students as novel, but Servants' Registry offices are strictly

supervised, and portions of Acts dealing with mines and shipping have interesting features. The New South Welsh Department of Public Works insists on public contractors paying trade union wages; New Zealand does much the same by statute. In the former colony much State work is done without the intervention of contractors, and a minimum wage of seven shillings a day is paid to all competent State workmen. In New Zealand public works are executed under what is styled the co-operative contract system. By this, piece-work is allotted to small groups of labourers who work as partners and share their earnings. In the last-named colony, and in New South Wales and Victoria, there are Government bureaux for unemployed workmen, and a member of the Cabinet bears the name of Minister of Labour.

The statutes and administrative developments above enumerated, goodly list as they make, do not by any means exhaust the catalogue of the State experiments of the last twelve years. They comprise, however, those which I have decided to describe in this volume. What their nature is, amid what circumstances they are being tried, with what measure of success, if any, they are meeting, may be gathered from the following chapters.

CHAPTER III

WOMEN'S FRANCHISE[1]

SOME classes are born to political power, some achieve it, and some have it thrust upon them. The last has been the lot of most, though not all, women in the three colonies and Commonwealth, where their sex may now vote to elect Members of Parliament. In South Australia the fight to obtain this privilege for them was begun, directed, and almost entirely waged by men. The part played by Miss Spence, Mrs. Nicholls, and their friends was useful but strictly subordinate. In Western Australia, too, the battle was a men's affair, and the gift was a pure piece of expediency, a move in the game of electioneering intended to affect the balance of power between two divisions of the colony. The grant of the suffrage by the Parliament of the Commonwealth in 1902 was chiefly noteworthy for the absence of any sort

[1] AUTHORITIES.—"Le Mouvement Féministe en Australie," by M. Wostenholme, Paris, *Revue Politique et Parlementaire*, 1898; "How Woman's Suffrage was won in South Australia," by Cornelius Proud, *Review of Reviews* (Aust.), January 1895; *Nouvelle Zelande*, by A. Siegfried, chap. ix. ("Les Femmes et le Mouvement Féministe"); Pierre Leroy-Beaulieu, *Nouvelles Sociétés Anglo-Saxonnes*, ("Le Féminisme"); The National Council of the Women of New Zealand (Annual Report), Christchurch, N.Z.; "Women's Franchise in New Zealand," letter by Mark Cohen in Sydney *Daily Telegraph*, 25th Dec. 1894; "Female Suffrage in New Zealand," by Norwood Young, *Westminster Review*, December 1894; "Why New Zealand Women get the Franchise," by Edward Reeves, *Westminster Review*, January 1895; N.Z. *Hansard*, 1891-1893; S.A. *Hansard*, 1893-1894; W.A. *Hansard*, 1898-1899; Commonwealth *Hansard*, April 1902.

of alarm, fervid advocacy, or strong repugnance. In New Zealand, where the franchise was first granted, the question was, it is true, opened and first discussed by politicians who sincerely urged the change on its own merits; but, as the struggle came to a head, general arguments scarcely masked the intense feeling caused by the cross-issue of Prohibition. In this, for the time, the broader question of woman's right to citizenship was almost submerged, and a heat, till then unknown on either side, marked the controversy. The appearance of the Prohibitionists on the scene in 1892 first made the question a centre of passion and excitement. Whether their hot advocacy helped the suffrage cause amongst men more than it hindered it, is a moot point; but it is fair to say that such active desire for the franchise as there was amongst the women was mainly aroused by them. Outside their lodges and their Women's Christian Temperance Union, the attitude of the sex was one of passive interest. Woman was not repelled or alarmed by the proposal; she found it rather agreeable than otherwise, —hardly more than that. This has been said to prove that the change came prematurely, and that the agitation for it was hollow. I do not think so. I believe the agitation was, and is, in the main genuine, both in Australia and New Zealand. Every public movement carries with its current a certain number of nondescripts, hypocrites, and time-servers. But it is unfair to judge any company by a few hangers-on. Pierre Leroy-Beaulieu does this when, writing of the woman's movement in the colonies, he says: "Au fond, tout ce mouvement féministe n'est guère qu'un vaste 'humbug,' imaginé par des politiciens en quête d'agitations toujours renouvelées, des déclassés, et des cerveaux brûlés." This is sheer injustice. On the other hand, there has

been too much painting of roseate pictures of ethical revolutions, and an impending moral millennium. It is as well to face the truth, and to dissipate any vision that may still be in the air of an intellectual uprising by enslaved Woman against the ancient and fraudful rule of tyrant Man. It is as well also to point out that the main motives behind the movement were ulterior. They may have been very good motives—some of them were; but they were not the motives which swayed the intellect of John Stuart Mill.

With the pioneers of the movement, however, it was otherwise. In New Zealand the four public men who more than others brought the question to the front, and kept it there, were Sir John Hall, Sir Julius Vogel, Sir Robert Stout, and Mr. John Ballance. Of these only the third belonged to the Temperance party, and I should doubt whether even in his case that connection made the least difference. Hall was a Conservative—or what passes for that in the colonies. Stout and Ballance were Radicals with advanced views on the land question. Vogel was a Tory Democrat, who, if he were alive now and able to share in politics, would be an active, and doubtless a prominent, Imperialist. All four honestly desired to "emancipate" woman, in the genuine belief that she would strengthen as well as purify the body politic.

The Progressive party, which has controlled New Zealand for the last eleven years with results delightful to some onlookers and scandalising to others, was born about the year 1877. Led by Sir George Grey, it was at first rather a party of attempts than of achievements. It had, however, its views and the courage of its opinions. One of these was that a beginning should be made of giving the parliamentary vote to women. In

1878 the Grey Government, then holding office, though by a precarious tenure, brought forward an Electoral Bill to simplify and extend the franchise. One of the changes proposed was that all women who were ratepayers should have the right to vote for candidates for Parliament. Women who were ratepayers were already entitled to vote at municipal elections, and Mr. Stout, the Attorney-General, in moving the second reading of the Electoral Bill, made the most of this, rightly enough. Stout was an able young barrister, who had been a schoolmaster and had come to the colony from Shetland. He was then in the first stage of a political career which, though interrupted more than once and relinquished too soon, was always interesting and often brilliant. He was destined to help women's franchise to become law—but not then. Parliament would not give the mildest instalment of it in 1878. Indeed, it was not till the year 1887 that a government was found prepared to embody in a bill the principle of a general extension of the suffrage to women, and to move it. Even then the Government was a coalition ministry the days of which were numbered, and which the colony was prepared willingly to let die. Stout was the Prime Minister. Moribund as the Stout-Vogel Ministry was, troubled as its days always had been, it contained three men with ideas. One of these men, Vogel, was by that time nearly at the end of his career in the colony. The net was drawn almost round him. Once half-worshipped as a wizard of finance, now with his finance discredited, he was worried by misfortunes which would have broken the spirit of many a stronger man. Physically, Vogel was never a strong man, and, tortured by gout for many years, he had by this time almost lost the use of his lower limbs. Out of doors, he was wheeled about

in a bath-chair; indoors, if he walked across a room, it was on crutches. Unable to stand when addressing the House, he was too deaf to hear the speeches of antagonists in debate, even when they were of the tribe of Boanerges. He spoke sitting—a man not past middle age, yet with his beard and the hair of his curiously-shaped head heavily streaked with grey, and with deep lines of suffering marking a face from which large, dark, gentle eyes gazed out patiently. So looked Vogel when, with his last political stake on the table, and with the game going against him, he calmly turned aside to move the Women's Franchise Bill. He made an able speech. The tones of the thick voice were rather monotonous, as deaf men's commonly are, and the language conventional; but argument and arrangement were there, and even imagination. In the light of actual experience it seems almost a little pathetic just now to read the eloquent prediction of the value of women's co-operation in public affairs, and the ennobling influence she was so quickly to exert in national life. One of the speaker's passages was effective for reasons personal. Sir Julius Vogel was a Jew, the first of his race who had climbed to the highest rung of the ladder in colonial politics. Speaking, then, on the gradual emancipation of women from legal and social trammels, he compared it with the grudging release of his race from analogous disabilities in England and Europe. Once the Jews had been shut out from almost every occupation, driven to limit such powers and abilities as they possessed to the sordid acquisition of money. Then London University opened its doors to them; other institutions admitted them to receive the higher education. Now with their faculties fairly developed, it was hardly an exaggeration to say that half the power of Europe was in their hands, and

that they were distinguishing themselves in the professions, and as artists and statesmen.

Few of the speeches in the debate reached a high level, though Stout supported his colleague argumentatively, and made one shrewd prediction—

"I believe that there is only one danger in passing this Bill. . . . That danger is, that if we have women voters and women representatives, they would strive to extend the functions of the State. This is, I believe, the only good argument against women's franchise, and it is the strongest argument."

Without conceding that the argument referred to is the strongest, or, indeed, any argument at all, it may be admitted that the speaker hit upon an important tendency. For the rest, an abundance of sentiment was poured forth, and the second-rate speeches against the proposal were, if possible, worse than those made for it. Alone amongst the opponents, Mr. Scobie Mackenzie, in a thoughtful speech, correctly estimated the chief result of the change when he declared that its main outcome would be to give plural votes to a certain number of men in the colony. Prophecy is, however, always dangerous, and Mr. Mackenzie was less happy when he hinted further on that priestly influence might work upon women's emotions to the injury of the national education system. Many others, it may be said, shared this—so far—groundless fear. Perhaps the gem of the whole debate was the address of a Maori member, Mr. Wi Peré. It was as brief as it was delicious, and the English translation of it may, therefore, be disentombed from *Hansard* entire :—

Mr. Peré.—"My opinion of this measure is that if it becomes law it will be a source of trouble in this House. I think we have only to look back to the trouble that came upon Adam through his

wife giving him an apple. We should bear in mind the evil that befell Samson when his locks were shorn by Delilah. We should also bear in mind the story of Naboth's vineyard—how a woman incited a man to murder another in order to obtain possession of his vineyard. I am afraid, if ladies were allowed seats in this House, it would distract the attention of some honourable members, and they would not pay so much attention to the affairs of the colony as they would otherwise do. Although I am getting up in years, I must confess I should be affected by a weakness of that sort. If the honourable gentleman in charge of this Bill would introduce a clause providing that only plain women should be allowed to come into the House, I think the source of danger would be removed; but if any beautiful ladies were sent to this House, I am quite sure they would lead astray the tender hearts of some honourable gentlemen, particularly the elder members of the House. I say, in conclusion, that if attractive ladies are allowed to come into this House, I am quite certain my own wife will never consent to my returning here."

The second reading of the Bill was carried, and though, on getting into committee, it at once went to pieces, a long step forward had been taken. The Stout-Vogel Ministry presently went the way of all coalitions, and for the next three years and a half Conservatism had another innings in New Zealand; yet the demand for the suffrage was kept alive, mainly through Sir John Hall's efforts. And when, in 1891, the Progressives found themselves not merely in office but actually in power—a novel experience for them—Hall, though in opposition, at once took the chance of promoting his pet reform. Ballance, the Prime Minister, met him half-way, and before the colony had awakened to the position, the Electoral Bill, then before the House of Representatives, was amended so as to give the vote to all adult women. The suddenness of the step was the more surprising because there had been little or no interest taken in the question in the general election of

December, 1890. Labour, its claims and its battles, had dwarfed everything else—except, perhaps, the eternal land question, complicated at the moment with the cry for a land tax. Some of the members who voted for women's franchise in 1891 had given no pledge on it, had not been asked to do so, had not so much as mentioned it on the platform. But the new labour element was strongly in favour of the reform, and, pledge or no pledge, supported it purely out of personal conviction. In this way it easily sailed through the Lower House. In the Upper, however, the Conservatives were still supreme, and welcomed neither the Electoral Bill as a whole nor the unexpected addition to it. Yet even in the Council, when it came to the vote, the majority against the women was but two. Obviously, after that victory was a question of no long time. A vigorous Temperance revival had sprung up over most parts of the colony, and reached its height, perhaps, in 1893. The Temperance leaders saw in the grant of the franchise to women what they believed to be a great opportunity. They threw the whole strength of their organisations into the movement, and, utilising especially the Women's Christian Temperance Union, were able to present bulky petitions in favour of the reform. The signatures to these in 1892 numbered some 31,000, were genuine, and all of women. On the other hand, the activity, the confidence, and the threats of the Prohibitionists began to alarm the brewers and liquor traders, who up to that time had regarded the suffrage controversy as outside of practical politics. They began to exert themselves, and to prepare counter petitions of some size. It was too late, however. The Radicals who had voted for the suffrage stuck to their guns, though they were by no means all Prohibitionists,

and though, in particular, the Ministers were not. Even certain of them whom the Prohibitionists were openly threatening to oust with the women's help did not flinch. The Upper House was uncertain up to the last moment. In 1892 it was prepared to grant the suffrage coupled with the condition that women might vote by letter. The Progressives saw in this an attempt to circumvent the secrecy of the ballot, and refused to accept the Bill with any such addition. In 1893 the Council was in a more combative mood than in 1892. The general elections were near at hand, and the hopes of the Opposition were reviving. Expectation was about evenly divided as to whether the Council would include the Electoral Bill in a general massacre, or would pass it in the belief that it would do the Progressives more harm than good. What turned the scale was a belief, held by many opponents of the Government, that the women would espouse the cause of the Prohibitionists, who were by this time at loggerheads with Mr Seddon, the Progressive Premier, and therefore with his colleagues. The Progressives — Liberals, as they preferred to call themselves—were at the moment in none too enviable a plight. Death had just taken away their first thoroughly successful leader, Ballance, in the midst of his work. His successor, Mr. Seddon, had hardly yet settled down in his seat, and the long duel between him and Sir Robert Stout, which was to strain the party so much, was beginning. All but a few of his antagonists, too, underrated the new Prime Minister. Their leaders in the House knew him for a bold and clever guerilla chief, with a store of restless vigour and a strong grasp of parliamentary forms and practice. But the party outside still made the mistake of judging him chiefly by his speeches, and of accepting as portraits the

flimsy caricatures of smart paragraph writers. They scarcely recognised, even yet, that they had to deal with an astute politician of the coolest pluck, of quickness and staying power, and of uncommon capacity for taking pains and for weighing probabilities at difficult junctures.[1] It was clear that the liquor question was a troublous one for the Liberals, and that the advent of the women might intensify their troubles. Yet even this opinion only just turned the scale in the Legislative Council. The Bill passed by two votes, and but for a misunderstanding would have passed by one only. It was a narrow margin, but it was enough, and the closeness of the finish did not lessen the joy of the victors, however much it embittered the reflections of the vanquished.

So, one fine morning of September 1893, the women of New Zealand woke up and found themselves enfranchised. The privilege was theirs — given freely and spontaneously, in the easiest and most unexpected manner in the world, by male politicians, whose leaders, for the most part, had been converted to faith in the experiment by reading the English arguments so gallantly but unavailingly used by Mill and others in controversies on the other side of the earth. Brief had been the season through which New Zealand women had had to struggle or agitate. No franchise leagues had fought the fight year after year, no crowded meetings had listened to harangues from eloquent and cultured women with intellects and powers of expres-

[1] Six years later the popular view of Mr. Seddon's abilities and position was very different. This is how it struck a French visitor to the colony in 1899 :— "Quand on parle du ministère en Nouvelle Zélande, il est entendu qu'on parle du premier ministre, l'honorable Richard Seddon, qui est à lui seul tout le ministère. Il a bien quelques collègues, pour la forme, mais c'est lui qui fait tout, dirige tout, est le vrai maître du pays, le 'King Dick,' comme on l'appelle dans la colonie."—André Siegfried in the *Revue Politique et Parlementaire.*

sion protesting even more effectually than their words against the political subjection of their sex. No New Zealand female orator or leader of women could by the most polite exaggeration be said to have stood in the forefront and borne a leading part in converting public opinion and swaying public feeling. Outside the Temperance lodges women speakers were strange phenomena in the colony, and when, in 1893, a few of them, under pressure from party managers, mustered up courage enough to mount the platform and make fluttering, half-audible little speeches, the audiences greeted them with the kindly curiosity and amused suspension of the critical faculties which are bestowed on clever children nervously reciting poems at school gatherings. Until that eventful year they had had far less to do with politics than certain of their English sisters. Women were, and still are, in a minority in New Zealand. Consequently their services as housewives and mothers were required to the fullest extent. Domestic servants were expensive and at times scarce, and women, of even the more comfortable class, lived a simpler, more hard-working home life than that of the many English women of a corresponding social grade, who have time and energy to give to party politics and platform speaking. No Primrose League had initiated them into the arts of canvassing; they had left elections alone, were not politicians, and, generally speaking, had displayed not the faintest desire to become voters. One or two of them had sat on school boards; a few hundred who were ratepayers were conducted to the poll every three years and recorded their votes without exciting comment or observation. Otherwise women knew nothing of public life, and public life nothing of them. They were as unprepared for the exercise of their novel right as any

newly enfranchised class could well be. The new departure had all the interest which attaches to a great change which had come suddenly, and on the probable effects of which the acutest mind might well hesitate to pronounce. Not that hesitation was a marked characteristic of the speeches and leading articles of the moment. Politicians hastened to pay court to the new sovereign. Preachers prophesied from the pulpit a new era of truth and righteousness. Editors gravely impressed upon their readers that a mighty social revolution was at hand. "If it succeeds," wrote Mr. W. H. Fitchett in the Australian *Review of Reviews* in Melbourne, "it will simply revolutionise modern politics all over the planet"; and this was the language of circumspection and self-restraint compared with the pæans of exultation which went up elsewhere. No hedging "ifs" modified most of the triumphant forecasts. Meanwhile what form was the revolution going to take? The oldest parliamentary hands privately confessed their ignorance. The sweeping nature of the extension added to the uncertainty. The vote had not been given to any mere section—to the wealthy, leisured, educated, or specially enthusiastic. The franchise was universal; virtually, every woman over twenty-one years old was entitled to it. There were 140,000 adult women in the colony, in a population which, in 1893, was not much above 700,000. The adult males were estimated at 180,000.

The Governor, Lord Glasgow, assented to the Electoral Bill on 19th September, and the general elections were to be held at the end of November. Moreover, the writs, it was certain, would have to be issued some weeks earlier, and after the issue of the writs no names could be put on the rolls. The registration laws in New

Zealand are of the simplest and easiest kind, for the object of those who framed them was to induce the largest possible number of persons living in the colony to enrol themselves. The duty of the registrars of elections is, in the colony, not to embarrass and trip up respectable citizens willing to exercise their rights of citizenship, but to help them to do what is considered their duty. Every effort permitted by the law was made in 1893 by the Government and its officials to smooth the way for all women who cared to register, while both political parties went smartly to work in every constituency, and the Temperance men and liquor traders vied with each other in their zeal to enroll the newly-enfranchised thousands. Only very rarely did they meet with any reluctance to use the new privilege. Applications for enrolment streamed in daily, and 109,000 women were placed on the rolls before the appearance of the writs stopped the rush.

In six weeks, then, the political woman was a fully equipped voter. She had her franchise. "What will she do with it?" asked the more wary of the male politicians of each other. Amongst the public every sort of expectation was formed and given expression to. Conservatives hoped much from her innate conservatism; social reformers were equally convinced that she would declare for social and humanitarian remedies; the Temperance societies rejoiced that their cause was now well-nigh as good as won; Churchmen and Roman Catholics looked for a great reinforcement of the party hostile to non-religious State education; generally there was a belief that public affairs were in the melting-pot, and that almost anything might come of the process. Not that the women of the colony had developed any very special, strange, or striking tendencies. New

Zealand is still very young, and its sixty years of life as a colony have been times of flux and change. To attempt a sketch of the women of any country, even in the most roughly impressionist style, is hard enough. How much harder is it to do so in the case of a colony where the passing of a single decade obviously affects the picture! To sketch what seemed the most marked characteristics of women in New Zealand at the time of their enfranchisement, a writer would need to

> Choose a firm cloud before it fall, and in it
> Catch, ere she change, the Cynthia of this minute.

Beyond an unmistakable physical robustness, the women were reassuringly devoid of surprising characteristics. They were neither intellectual nor babyish, neither highly cultured nor illiterate, neither aristocratic nor distinctively plebeian, neither artistic nor vulgar, neither venturesome in thought nor narrowly conventional and superstitious. In a land where millionaires were unknown and paupers few; where "cities" were urban districts loosely spread amongst gardens and plantations, and where the houses in "towns" were sown broadcast as in the most scattered English villages; where less than three-quarters of a million of British colonists were sprinkled, at the rate of about six to the square mile, along pleasant coasts lying between sublime mountains and the open ocean in the healthiest climate in the world,—it would be odd if women were aught but a wholesome, happy, intelligent, home-loving race. In the drawing-rooms of the comfortable, two-storied wooden houses which the wealthiest class were well content to inhabit, you might meet refined ladies who required merely the costumes of the Regency to seem Jane Austen's women come back to

life. Housework, music, embroidery, and the growing and arrangement of flowers were their arts; they dressed simply, but not without care and taste; painted and enamelled female faces would have seemed as grotesque at their social gatherings as would liveried footmen with powdered hair. They read books—chiefly English novels. The younger of them were as fond of cycling and lawn-tennis as their English sisters, and had begun to play golf, which they obediently called "goff." When they cycled they wore skirts. They danced much and well, and rode on horseback a great deal more than any Englishwomen outside the aristocracy or country gentry. The university colleges were open to them as in Scotland, and a few scores had taken degrees. There were no lady doctors or lawyers. Those of them who had to enter the struggle for life earned their bread as school-teachers, factory hands and out-workers, or as domestic servants.

In 1893 there were probably fourteen thousand women in the colony earning wages in domestic service. The colonial servant-girl is the subject of numerous myths. Almost as many stories are told about her as about the snakes of Australia or the winds of New Zealand. It is the old tale over again of Æsop's sculptor with his marble group of a man strangling a lion. Could a lion have wrought in marble he would have reversed the result. The articles that one reads on domestic service in the colonies are not written by the cooks and housemaids. It is the "missus," or some one belonging to the same class as the "missus," who does so. So we hear much of the idleness, fickleness, clumsiness, and rebelliousness of Kate and Mary Ann. We are assured by respectable globe-trotters that these household tyrants demand and receive extravagant wages, — that there is nothing

moderate about them, except the amount of service which they deem an ample return. We are told that they will not wear caps, and fling such badges of servitude defiantly on the floor when they are proffered by some venturesome mistress freshly landed from England. When applying for places, they scoff at requests for references to former mistresses, and wage war against the colonial custom of asking applicants for situations to produce written "characters" from those who have employed them. Indeed, Pope's line, "Most women have no character at all," has been quoted of colonial servants. Their evenings are supposed to be given up to revelry abroad, or to hospitality—at their masters' expense—at home. Christmastide, or the local races, or any one of a variety of small festive seasons, are supposed to furnish these capricious domestics with excuse enough to give warning—or to depart without noise or notice. Should one of them have any share of good looks, or betray any signs of industry or usefulness, she is sure to be snapped up by some stalwart young colonist on the look-out for a wife. And though it might be thought that the conditions of such a service as this would be tempting, we read constantly that nothing will induce girls born in the colonies to go out to service. The race of servants must be recruited from Great Britain or it would die out.

This picture may have been a fair caricature thirty years ago, but was never more than a caricature, and is an absurd libel on things domestic as they had come to be in 1893. One might as well accept Bret Harte's sketches of society in Roaring Camp and Buckeye Hollow as truthful delineations of family life in Boston. In out-of-the-way holes and corners in New Zealand the servant-girl, no doubt, was a scarce and peculiar person

eight years ago. For the most part, however, the supply was equal to the demand, and the average girl was clean, energetic, and fairly competent. Servants' wages were, as a rule, about sixty per cent higher than those paid to the same class in London. But then families in which more than three female servants were kept were few and far between. Nurses and housemaids, even cooks, were usually willing to make themselves useful in odd ways which would astonish the London domestic with her definite views about the division of household labour. Strong, quick, and handy, they, for the most part, earned their high wages well; wore caps when asked to do so; and were not guilty of insolent airs or familiarities. They expected to be treated as fellow-creatures, but not as members of their employer's family. Nor were they wont to abandon a good place hastily; a considerate mistress seldom lost a competent servant except through marriage. As the number of spinsters in the colony had been increasing proportionately to that of bachelors, the relative number of good cooks and housemaids carried off to the altar was diminishing in 1893. Colonial-born girls were taking to service readily enough.

Popular as factory life was, some of the factory hands and out-workers were very poorly paid; otherwise women workers usually received much better wages than in the Mother Country. A few were beginning to earn a fair livelihood as telephone clerks, typewriters, and book-keepers. Most of the sex, of course, became wives and mothers, and the sturdy countrywomen,—farmers' and shepherds' wives and daughters, or helpmates of the miner, shearer, and bushfeller,—who were mistresses of the farmsteads and cottages in the forest of the West or the grassy downs of the Eastern settlements, formed a

fine guarantee that the island race would be sane in body and mind. Generally speaking, they knew as little of the world's baser iniquities, were as pure, as full of pity and affection, did as much to keep life sweet, and were as much too good for the ordinary man, as women are everywhere.

Party feeling ran high in New Zealand eight years ago, and the general election was hard fought. The women voters' baptism of fire was a brisk enough experience. The Progressive land-and-labour policy, rejected by the Upper House, was before the country awaiting a verdict, and there were cross-currents in the shape of prohibition and the demands of the churches for Bible-reading and for aid for their schools. Candidates abounded,—the pay of members had been raised in the year before to £20 a month. Bishops harangued their flocks; clergymen stood for constituencies; the Catholic hierarchy, though formerly in fierce opposition to the reform, was prompt to use it; the liquor trade exerted all its organised strength, for the first time. On the other hand, full use was made of the pulpit, and the Puritans of the Temperance lodges, filled with the conviction that a great deliverance from the drink curse was at hand, appealed with fervour to the god of political battles. Neither pastorals nor sermons much disturbed burly Mr. Seddon, who threw himself into this, the first big scrimmage of his premiership, with a large and boyish enjoyment. He was here, there, and everywhere, with energy and vitality enough for half-a-dozen leaders; and his mighty voice and jovial presence cheered the supporters of the Government at scores of meetings. On the whole, the women took the hurly-burly wonderfully coolly. They did not shirk committee work, were brisk canvassers, and flocked in thousands to the public

meetings, where by common consent the front rows of seats were given up to them. But far from displaying hysterical emotion, they would sit rank upon rank listening in rapt attention with hardly a sound; while their sombre dresses and still more sombre silence, impassive faces and irresponsive stillness, unnerved young speakers and damped the spirits of even veterans of the hustings. Careful coaching was needed to persuade them to clap their hands, and persuasive demonstration had to be employed to show them the political uses of boot-heels and umbrellas. She was a bold woman who taught her sex what might be done by the waving of white handkerchiefs; while the bolder spirits who first dared to second votes of thanks underwent much mental anguish. The first lady electors who came to meetings with bouquets of flowers for favourite candidates did not venture to hand their gifts up themselves. To a man—usually a young man—was deputed the task of presenting the flowers with a bow, or hurling them enthusiastically at the platform champion's shirt-front.

Polling day was awaited with dread by the electioneering agents and returning officers, with doubt by politicians, and with pleasurable excitement by the women. The ballot might have surprises in store. It might be expected that factory and shop girls would vote for the party of the labour laws, that state schoolmistresses would be sound on national education, and that the Margarets and Bridgets of kitchen and pantry would vote as the priests told them. Beyond that who could tell? The official mind apprehended crowding and confusion, though twice the usual number of polling booths had been got ready. Many an anxious election agent hardly slept o' nights, or if he dreamed, had visions of enthusiastic female supporters scratching

out his candidate's name on the ballot paper instead of scoring out the enemy's, as is the correct New Zealand mode. In New Zealand all the elections for Parliament are held on the same day, and in 1893 polling day fell on 28th November. The eventful morning was bright and fine almost everywhere. The women began to vote early—at about nine o'clock—and by amicable arrangement were allowed in the cities to have certain booths pretty much to themselves until noon. A New Zealand elector may vote at whichever booth in his district he pleases. In several districts the committees took care that a woman's should be the first vote recorded. Workmen's wives "tidied up" at home, put on their best clothes, and walked to the nearest poll. Sometimes their menkind escorted them, for it was a general though not universal holiday. More often the women of one or two neighbour families made up a party and sallied out together. Between noon and two o'clock, dinner postponed politics; in the afternoon the women again thronged the booths, and had almost all comfortably voted by tea-time, when the rush of workmen, which in the colonies begins an hour or so earlier than in England, began to flood the polls. All things were done in courtesy and order, without rudeness, hustling, or hysteria. Good-natured neighbours took it in turns to look after each other's children while the voting was being done. Each woman armed herself conscientiously with her number, and on the whole the novices went through the ordeal with much credit. The proportion of spoiled ballot papers was very little larger than at previous elections. When the polls closed at seven o'clock, 90,000 women had peacefully voted. In the towns, crowds of men and women stood patiently in the streets from about nine o'clock onwards, waiting to see the results

not only in their own district but of the colony's elections. The order kept by these thousands of full-fledged citizens was astonishing. They talked, laughed, and chaffed each other, and boys ran about shouting. There was no drunkenness, no brutality. Each party recived verdicts, as they were posted up, with groans or acclamation. The interest was of the keenest, but, as there was no irresponsible, voteless crowd merely bent on horseplay, there was no rowdyism. Some time after midnight it was known that the Progressives had swept the field, and with a sigh of relief or resignation, the colony went soberly to bed.

Any sketch of the part played by women at the elections of '93 will serve with but few changes for those of '96 and '99. The novelty soon wore off, as did any feeling of nervousness—that was all. Women went on making the fullest use of the franchise without let or hindrance—indeed, with the most pointed encouragement. In several of the urban constituencies the female electors came to outnumber the men, a result which the males accepted with jocose cheerfulness. The first town in which this feminine preponderance was noted was, I believe, Dunedin, in 1896. There was a natural feeling of curiosity as to the choice of a constituency so composed. Out of eleven candidates the electors had to select three representatives. If the "better half" of the electorate had been responsible for the choice made it would have appeared to indicate that the feminine fondness for variety was carried into politics. Whilst the first and third winners were Conservatives, number two was a Labour member. The first and second were staunch supporters of secular education, the third of denominational schools. Change was the order of the day, for the three former members

were all rejected. Mr. Scobie Mackenzie, who headed the poll, was a bright and adroit speaker, one of the best in the colony. But, lest it should be hastily inferred that the political woman's heart is only to be won by oratory, it should be noted that the third elected member was disabled from making any speeches by an obstinate sore throat. The gentleman who came in at the head of the poll had to overcome a little difficulty, inasmuch as in former years he had been—as we have seen—one of the very few opponents of the grant of the franchise who had displayed any ability. Mr. Mackenzie, however, was quite equal to the occasion, and now assured the ladies pleasantly that he had opposed them from the conviction "not that the franchise was too good for women, but that women were too good for the franchise." The contest was warm, and tidings were cabled to England that women electors had disgraced themselves by rowdyism at a meeting. This was at least an exaggeration. The meeting was a small semi-private gathering of a women's association. One amiable clergyman in the chair alone represented the duller sex. A persistent but unpopular speaker was greeted with hisses, outcries, stamping, and the brandishing of umbrellas. Business for a time came to a standstill. That was the utmost that could be said. It was from a much larger and wholly masculine meeting, held in the same week in Dunedin, that an unlucky candidate, after being disastrously pelted with evil-smelling eggs and noisome vegetables, was escorted home under police protection.

The share taken by the women in the three general elections in which they have had the rights of citizens may best be shown by these two short tables :—

Date of General Election.	Estimated Total Adult Males in Colony.	Number on Rolls.	Proportion of Adult Males registered as Electors.	Number who voted.	Proportion of Males on Rolls who voted.
1893 . .	179,539	193,536	*	129,792	69·61†
1896 . .	197,002	196,925	99·96	149,471	75·90
1899 . .	214,773	210,529	98·02	159,780	79·06†

Date of General Election.	Estimated Total Adult Females in Colony.	Number on Rolls.	Proportion of Adult Females registered as Electors.	Number who voted.	Proportion of Females on Rolls who voted.
1893 . .	139,471	109,461	78·48	90,290	85·18†
1896 . .	159,656	142,305	89·13	108,783	76·44
1899 . .	171,373	163,215	95·24	119,550	75·70†

In the first year of the three the slovenly state of the rolls caused the percentage of male voters to be abnormally low. At the end of that year the rolls were purged by the simple and drastic method of striking off all names the owners of which had not recorded their votes at the general elections. This process has been enforced in the colony by law ever since, and the rolls are consequently clean enough. The proportion of women enrolled in 1893 was also much smaller in relation to the total number in the colony than was the case in later years. Naturally, those who were keenest to use the new privilege were among the first to be registered. Many of the more indifferent, who were content to be left out during the six weeks' rush in September and October 1893, were afterwards looked

* The number on rolls was in excess of the estimated adult male population at the date of the election.

† Excluding figures for three electorates in which there was no contest.

up and induced to register. Something, no doubt, may be allowed for reaction after the first novelty had worn off. After making all allowances, it would seem that in the second and third general elections in which women played their part the difference between the proportions of the two sexes which were enrolled and voted was very small. It is fair to say that, roughly, women make very much the same use of the franchise as do men.

For fifteen months New Zealand amongst the colonies had women's franchise all to itself. Then, on the 18th December 1894, the South Australian Parliament likewise passed an Electoral Bill which changed manhood to adult suffrage. The contest over the reform was scarcely as long in Adelaide as it had been at Wellington, and most, though not all, of the features of the second struggle resembled those of the first. In South Australia, as in New Zealand, the first move made towards enfranchisement was a proposal to give votes to women owning property. Bills with this aim were brought forward by Dr. Stirling in 1885 and Mr. Caldwell in 1889, but nothing came of them. A Women's Suffrage League was, however, founded in 1888, and began propagandist work, carrying it on for the next six years with an activity which made it a real educating influence. No equivalent body existed in New Zealand, where local divisions would have made the establishment of any society of the kind much more difficult. South Australia's smaller and much more centralised population is particularly easy to get at. On the map the colony is enormous; for business or political purposes, however, nearly the whole of the community is found to be within striking distance of Adelaide. Side by side with the Suffrage League, the far greater political force of the Women's Christian

Temperance Union ranged itself; and, as elsewhere, the agitation became to a large extent identified with the Temperance movement. Feeling on the liquor question was not so hot in South Australia at the crisis of the suffrage conflict as it had been in New Zealand; and the total abstinence societies of the Australian colony showed somewhat more of the wisdom of the serpent than their New Zealand brethren. They were well enough advised to avoid any imperious or threatening attitude, and did not scare or irritate any considerable section of the public into sympathy with the liquor trade. They were none the less busy, and were unquestionably the chief practical influence at the back of the agitation for the enfranchisement. As in New Zealand, the Labour members in Parliament voted in a body for the women's cause. It was not until 1893, however, that the reform came prominently to the front. In the earlier months of that year, an able Progressive Government took office under Mr. C. C. Kingston, a Radical of strong opinions, strong physique, and even stronger will. Cheery "Charley" Kingston, pioneer of Compulsory Arbitration, has always been a man of many friends, but before 1893 very few of these could have expected ever to see him appear on the public stage as the champion of women's rights. He was, indeed, clearly committed to a disapproval of adult suffrage. His ministry, however, represented a coalition—not between Progressives and Reactionaries, but of the more justifiable sort which secures a reunion of divided Progressive sections. A reunited party can only be held together by concessions, and Mr. Kingston had lieutenants who had been leaders. In such case even the most masterful colonial premier cannot be blamed for admitting the virtues of

the practice of give-and-take. Several of the South Australian ministers favoured the granting of the suffrage, and one of them at least believed in it with unbounded enthusiasm. This gentleman, Doctor, now Sir John, Cockburn, was a London M.D., who, after emigrating to South Australia, had quickly come to the front in public life there. He had been Prime Minister, and had led the way in passing a progressive land tax. An educated Radical with ideals, persuasive in manner, and with the gift of pleasant speech, he was just the advocate for such a reform as women's franchise. He had intense faith in its social and political virtues—faith which he was not afraid to express in the most glowing terms. To his presence in the Kingston Ministry it was mainly due that in June 1893 a Government measure, conferring the suffrage on all adult women, was introduced and pushed forward. In South Australia parliamentary franchise means something more than in many other parts of the Empire. It includes the right of voting for the Upper as well as for the Lower House, though the franchise in the case of the one is not as wide as in that of the other. The Bill of 1893 put female on exactly the same footing as male electors in respect of both Houses. It contained, however, a peculiar and novel proviso in the shape of a clause stipulating that its adoption should be submitted to the people of the colony by *referendum*. The women were to vote on it by way of showing whether they wished for it, and the men in order to show whether they desired the women to have it. Reasonable as this was in principle, the opponents of the suffrage fastened upon it as a new-fangled and fantastic notion, and it supplied them with an excuse for wrecking the measure for that session. In 1894 the Bill was again

brought in, this time without any *referendum*. A petition in its favour, signed by eleven thousand men and women, was taken to be a sufficient proof that the country was willing to see Parliament pass it. Most of the signatures to the big document were secured by the Women's Christian Temperance Union — an indication of the phase into which the conflict had now passed. As the reform would involve a change in the constitution, absolute majorities of both Houses were needed to pass it through Parliament. The Upper House at Adelaide consisted of twenty-four members, the Lower of fifty-four. Thirteen votes were therefore wanted in the one and twenty-eight in the other. The members voting had to be actually present in their respective Houses; pairs did not count. Thanks to recent election successes, the Progressives were in the unusual position in 1894 of having a majority in the Upper House. The Bill was therefore introduced there, and after passing the second Chamber was sent down to the Legislative Assembly. In the latter the final fight over it lasted for three months. For many weeks Cockburn found it impossible to secure his statutory vote. The absence of a single supporter would be fatal—so nicely-balanced was the strength of the two sides. At one time the necessary single supporter went away to Tasmania and stayed there for a month; at another crisis three members paired instead of staying to vote. Finally, the conflict took a grotesque aspect: the opponents of the measure simply talked against time every evening until eleven o'clock, at which hour an elderly and infirm supporter of the measure regularly went home to bed. At last, through an accident, the obstruction collapsed. The obstructionists were outwitted one day into believing that a certain friend of

the Bill had gone away, and that they could let the division be taken. The gentleman in question had not gone away; he had meant to do so, but was detained in a certain lobby by a Government emissary, who beguiled him with pleasant converse for the needful few minutes. So the magic number of twenty-eight was secured and the women of the colony enfranchised. Vainly in committee the enemy inserted two wrecking amendments — one giving women the right to enter Parliament; the other bestowing on them the privilege of voting by letter whenever their homes lay more than three miles from a polling booth, or they were prevented from going thither by the state of their health. Rather than surrender the fruits of victory, the suffrage party accepted both these unsolicited favours, and the conflict ended in the endowment of women with political rights in their completest form.

The Bill passed on the morning of 18th December 1894. It was, however, reserved for Her Majesty's consideration, and sent to England for that purpose. The royal assent was announced in Adelaide by cable message despatch on 9th February 1895, but the document containing the assent did not reach the colony until 17th March. There was, however, no such cause for haste or anxiety as there had been in New Zealand, for the general elections were not to take place until 25th April 1896. There was, therefore, ample time for the work of registration, and so thoroughly was it done, that, out of rather more than 80,000 women in the colony, nearly three-fourths were quietly enrolled. The polling itself was gone through in the same good-humoured, orderly fashion, and with much the same scenes as had been witnessed in New Zealand seventeen months before. The result did not

swell the majority of the Progressives as in the island colony; it did not, however, sensibly diminish it. Neither at that election nor three years afterwards, in 1899, did the women make as much use as had been expected of the right to vote by letter. The following figures will show the proportions of the sexes that were enrolled and that voted at the two General Elections :—

	On Roll.			Voted.		
	Males.	Females.	Total.	Males.	Females.	Total.
General Election, 1896 .	77,972	59,044	137,781	51,668	39,355	91,348
General Election, 1899 .	83,698	68,695	152,393	54,972	38,438	93,410

From this it is seen that in the first year out of 137,781 enrolled electors the proportion of voters was as high as 66·30 per cent, and that the women fully held their own. In 1899 the proportion of voters was lower in both sexes, but the decline was much heavier amongst the women than the men. Even then, however, the feminine vote was substantial, amounting as it did to considerably more than half of the enrolled strength of the sex. At neither elections did any woman offer herself as a candidate for Parliament. Miss Spence, however, was nominated to represent South Australia at the Federal Convention of 1897, and at the election held in March of that year received 7000 votes, a number which amounted to a very respectable minority.

The adoption of women's franchise by the Parliament of Western Australia in July 1899 was unexpected, and the circumstances in which the step was taken somewhat curious. The statistics of population in the western colony

in that year showed that the relative position of the sexes was peculiar. The flood of gold-seekers which had been pouring in for six years was chiefly made up of adult males, so that at the end of 1899 there were very nearly twice as many males as females in the country. Of a population of 171,000, less than 59,000 were females, and of these slightly more than half were under fifteen years of age, and seven-eighths were under forty-five. Only 610 women were returned as past the age of sixty-five, so that one threadbare joke against political women had very small application to Western Australia. This singularly small proportion of the aged was in no way due to an unhealthy climate, for the climate of the south-western corner of Australia is rather favourable than otherwise to the attainment of old age. It was merely an index of the extreme youth of the community. While, as just said, a little more than half the females were under fifteen, only two-sevenths of the males were below that age. When weighing the possibilities of women's franchise, therefore, the West Australians had not to expect anything like so large a mass of new and inexperienced electors as had other colonies, for, roughly speaking, there were in the western colony more than 70,000 men of full age, and but 20,000 women. Not that this had much to do with the unlooked-for decision. The cause of that was also found in the peculiar conditions of the colony's population, but not in the small proportion of the female element to the male. It sprang from the division of the community into two classes—the old and the new, the landowners and the gold-seekers, the settled, governing element and the immigrant Outlanders. The latter, the men of the gold-fields, after struggling for years for a larger measure of political

power, were in 1899 about to obtain it. They were to have a much stronger voice in the Parliament of Perth, and they were about to bring the colony within the circle of states of the Commonwealth. Sir John Forrest was about to resign and end a few month afterwards his ten years' dictatorship. The old order was passing away, and the ruling families felt the ground moving under their feet. The politicians from the older settled districts looked anxiously round for something to break the force of the threatening flood. It occurred to them that this might be found in the enfranchisement of women. Naturally adult women were in a larger proportion in the older districts than in the raw mining settlements in the desert. By enfranchising women the voting strength of the farming and grazing districts and of the seaports would be increased, and the influence of the Outlanders to some extent neutralised. In 1893 a proposal to extend the suffrage to women had been before the Lower House at Perth. It had been rejected then and in later sessions, and the majority against it had not diminished. Sir John Forrest had opposed it on its merits, and had even gone so far as to say in 1898 that, while he knew that the change would give the older districts more power, he did not consider that a sufficient reason for consenting to it. Others were of a different opinion. Face to face at once with Federation and the increasing strength of the goldfields, the "old gang" resolved to play a last card—the queen. So it came about that on the 12th of July 1899, by seventeen votes to six, Parliament resolved that provision should be made for conferring the suffrage upon women. It cannot be said that the tone of the debate on this not unimportant occasion was lofty or even spirited. It has been the writer's business to read many poor

speeches on the suffrage, and to listen to not a few. Of all the hopelessly uninspired and uninspiring discussions on the subject, that at Perth was perhaps the flattest and most meanly commonplace. The mover of the resolution, Mr. Walter James, was brief, and his few words were not undignified. He had always supported the reform, and he was now satisfied quietly to accept the sudden access of support it had gained, and not to indulge either in sarcasm or false sentiment. With just a touch of irony, he said—"I understand that, owing no doubt to the full discussion the question has received on prior occasions, there has been a sudden conversion of a great number of members." For the rest, he pointed with justifiable pleasure to the growing interest being taken by the women of the colony in the reform, and prophesied that the share they would take in public life would be active and beneficial. The only other speech worth notice was Sir John Forrest's defence of his conversion, which amounted to this—that public opinion in the colony had come round to the change, and that it was not for him to try and baffle the people. As for the charge of unfairness to the gold-fields electorates, were not the gold-fields themselves strongly for women's franchise? Could it be unjust to them to give them what they had asked for? So, after a little roasting of the new converts over a fire made with extracts from their former speeches against the reform, the resolution passed by three to one. The victory was decisive, though some of the circumstances hardly provoked enthusiasm. In the event, those who had built their calculations upon what the women would do with their votes turned out to be mistaken. Women voted in numbers, and were as courteously treated on polling-day as in the other colonies. But Federation was carried

by an enormous majority, and at the first election of Federal representatives Free-trade and Labour scored conspicuous successes, while the Forrest party, then fighting without its chief, was ejected from office.

In New South Wales Sir Henry Parkes moved the adoption of the suffrage as early as 1891, and was beaten. Mr. George Reid was the first Prime Minister to secure the vote of a majority of the elective chamber for enfranchisement. When his ministry fell the women's cause was taken up by Mr. Bernhard Wise, Attorney-General in the ministry which displaced Mr. Reid's.

In 1900, and again in 1901, a Government Bill to extend the suffrage to women was carried through the Lower House in Sydney, to be defeated in the Upper. In 1901 the defeat was reserved for the third reading. Next year the victory to be mentioned in the next paragraph made further resistance in New South Wales illogical. In August 1902, therefore, female franchise was assented to by both Houses of the State Legislature.

Two months earlier came what many will regard as the greatest success yet gained by the friends of women's franchise. The principle, in its widest form, was adopted by the Federal Parliament. Moreover, it was adopted quietly and without the least public excitement. Its use in three colonies had at least shown that it was harmless. That its most sarcastic opponents admitted. True, they likewise asserted that it had done no good. But advocates were found who thought otherwise, and many members were found ready to believe that beneficial results would follow in good time, and willing to wait a reasonable term for these. The opposition was of the mildest. When, for instance, a hostile amendment was moved in the Senate, that body did not trouble to divide on it, but rejected it on the voices.

A word on the course of the agitation for the suffrage in the colonies in which, at the time of writing this, women are left voteless. In Queensland and Tasmania women's franchise has not awakened any interest to speak of. In Victoria it has repeatedly been carried through the Lower Houses of Parliament, to be regularly rejected by the Upper.

Certain results of women's franchise can be at once noted, admit of no dispute, and are common to all three colonies. In all the working of the experiment has shown that when women get the suffrage they will use it. They are not afraid to go to the voting-booths. Nor do the men of any class try to discourage them from doing so. There are no signs of disorder at the polls. The throngs of women in and about the booths have caused no inconvenience and met with no rudeness. Women voters as a class are not specially singled out for ridicule or caricature. A few young gentlemen of Cambridge University, England, expended more stupid insolence on the sex in 1897 than the larrikins of three colonies have cared to display in eight years. Colonial elections were quiet in former years; they are quiet still. The word-pictures also of which colonists used to have so many given them —of domestic discord, of children forgotten, husbands uncared for, dinners uncooked, dress and appearance neglected—have already almost passed from memory. Electioneering committees report that families, when living under one roof, nearly always vote on the same side. It is the commonest sight to see husband, wife, and grown-up children walking or driving cheerfully to the polls together. The head of a family has become a more important factor in politics than of old. Domestic servants often follow the lead of master and mistress; though, where these are Conservatives, the servants may

vote with their own class. Among the Catholics, the Irish women vote very much as the Church directs, when it does direct. There is not at present the faintest sign of any beginning of revolution in dress or manners—any wearing of knickerbockers, smoking of cigarettes, or scorning of marriage. Enfranchisement has neither led to divided households nor divided skirts. There are probably twenty times as many "new women" in London as in the seven colonies, where Mrs. Lynn Linton, were she alive, would find it hard to discover a shrieking sisterhood at which to shriek. There has been no rush of women into the learned professions in New Zealand or South Australia, though a Bill has been passed in the former colony permitting qualified women to practise as barristers and solicitors, and two or three ladies have availed themselves of it. There are perhaps a dozen lady doctors in New Zealand. Socially and industrially women were not slaves before they had the franchise, and they show no indication of becoming tyrants now that they have it. It may be said with truth that the invention of pneumatic tyres and the safety bicycle has done more to widen their daily lives and give them freer scope than any change yet worked in them by the possessing of political rights.

It is by no means easy as yet to trace with any certainty their influence on public life, to separate their work from that of men, or to estimate with any accuracy how they have affected the course of legislation. Speaking generally, they have simply become citizens whose part in public affairs is not sharply distinguished from men's. Those of them who study politics find that the opinions and interests which divide men divide them also; those who do not trouble their heads with politics are content to vote with their mankind or their class.

Here and there one sees something done which may fairly be set down to their influence. Thus in New Zealand they hastened the humane and belated law which raised the age of consent from thirteen to sixteen. They have strengthened the Temperance party, though not so much in Parliament as at the local option polls. In the last of these, taken in December 1899, no less than 118,575 votes were cast for prohibition without compensation—a striking and significant incident. It is true that the local option law was passed in the session before women first used the vote, but much of the effects likely in time to follow will, I believe, be their work. In New Zealand, the Progressives, whose policy had already captured the country when the franchise was extended, still hold office, after an unbroken tenure of eleven years. Mr. Seddon is wont to observe that woman's "innate conservatism" has taken the form of keeping in office through three Parliaments the ministry which she found there when she came on the scene. For three years, from November 1895 to November 1898, the pace of the Progressives' forward march slackened; but at the end of 1898 they could point to the Old Age Pensions Act and an extension of municipal franchise, and though 1899 was not so fruitful, advanced measures were carried in 1900. In South Australia, from 1896 onward, interest was distracted from social reforms and turned to Federation. A long and doubtful struggle between the two Houses of Parliament over a reform affecting the Upper also consumed much time and energy, and the Progressives were further hampered by years of drought and bad harvests. Yet factories and shops Acts, both of the most advanced kind, have lately been adopted in South Australia. If the women have done little to hasten progress there, they have done nothing

to impede it. In South as in Western Australia they shared with the men in the enthusiasm for Federal union. The passing of a law in 1898 to make divorce easier in New Zealand has been attributed to them, but the same law—the Stephen Act of New South Wales—had been in force for years in the two chief Australian colonies, and there women had no votes. It is possible enough, however, that some votes for the reform were gained in the New Zealand Parliament by a belief amongst male politicians that "the women would like it." Old Age Pensions is another social question which the female vote is sometimes supposed to have brought to the front. In Australia, however, the two colonies which are trying the experiment are not the two which have extended the suffrage. It is significant that in New Zealand women may not yet stand for Parliament, while in South Australia, where they may, none have yet done so.

Mainly, then, the good results of the great reform have been negative rather than positive. They have disproved nearly every prophecy of evil indulged in before the experiment was tried. But beyond proving that in three free, wholesome, educated British communities, containing altogether some fourteen hundred thousand souls, women can be suddenly enfranchised in a body, without doing the slightest harm to themselves or any one else, the theoretical revolution has not yet proved much. After the election of 1893, Sir John Hall, than whom there could be no one better able to speak, was asked what effect the enfranchisment had had on the strength of parties in New Zealand. His reply was, "I believe, hardly any." That is as true to-day as it was in 1894. It may be noted, furthermore, that the tone of public life has been hardly affected. There is, perhaps, a little less coarseness and

a little more cant in the lower class of public addresses; but the natural and legitimate expectation that undesirable men would find it harder to enter public life than heretofore has not been fulfilled in any colony. All but two or three per cent of members in the average colonial Parliament have always been at least respectable. All but the same small proportion are still respectable. There has been no change whatever. Even the onlookers, who predicted that any other definite results would be very slow to follow the suffrage, thought that there might at once be an alteration in this respect; but there has not.

Apart from this, it would have been unreasonable to expect that within a few years women would begin to exercise any strong and widespread influence in politics. Politics, after all, are varied, complex, and hard to master. The politician's trade, like others, must be learned, and the process is slow and troublesome. In the colonies the enfranchised women knew at first very little more of public affairs than so many children. They are slowly beginning to learn. They join societies, discuss and read about public questions, attend meetings, taking an interest in impersonal affairs of State, which ten years ago would have seemed utterly outside the scope of their lives. Some of them are giving attention to local and municipal matters. The National Council of Women in New Zealand is a small body, with but the slenderest claims to represent the women of the colony outside those attached to the prohibitionist movement. But the papers read at its gatherings are sometimes able, and the discussions thereon often interesting; they are the beginning of better things, and they are certainly one of the results of the suffrage. If the slowness with which direct

results are following the great reform are disappointing to some onlookers, it is mainly because the expectations and hopes founded on it were so often utterly extravagant. There was so much rather tall talking in 1893 and 1894, so much foreshadowing of social revolution, moral regeneration, a new era of purity, and the cleansing of Augean stables, that the slow and gradual nature of the outcome is, of course, a tempting contrast for the enemy to enlarge on. It was not merely the third-rate makers of speeches for women's franchise who sometimes overdid their case; to quote their washy sentimentalities would be unfair to the cause, for no cause ought to be judged by its weakest advocates. But take a leader, a thinker, like Sir William Fox, who spoke by comparison the words of truth and soberness. As the head of the Temperance movement in New Zealand, he naturally accepted the principle of women's rights in 1878. He spoke with no ordinary weight, for he had then had thirty-five years' experience of public life, and had been four times Premier. He was an educated reader and an able writer, had travelled much, and was an observant, quick-witted, chivalrous gentleman. Speaking on the abortive proposal to enfranchise female ratepayers, he said of women:

"They are equal to men in their minds, in their influence, more than equal to men in their influence upon wise legislation of any kind, more than man's equal in those sentiments which have most influence in promoting the true welfare of a country. They are less liable to be debarred from voting according to their real opinions. They have no cliques, no parties, no overdrawn accounts at the bank. If a woman sees a good object before her, she goes straight at it. . . . I believe they would generally vote on the right side."

Women voters, however, are neither the angels nor sages they would have needed to be to fulfil in half-a-dozen years one quarter of the expectations founded on their enfranchisement. And so, whilst they have entirely falsified the vaticinations of the prophets of calamity, they have also, for the present, given their more ardent champions some cause to tone down their transports. It is not the first time that the unexpected has happened in matters in which woman has condescended to concern herself. For some thousands of years she has been pleased to puzzle man's heavy wits, and playfully to baffle his laboured calculations. It ought not to astonish any one that her earlier course as a politician has supplied one more example of her ability to turn masculine prophetic wisdom into something suspiciously like foolishness.[1]

[1] In July 1902 a deputation of Englishwomen representing Suffrage Societies waited upon the Premier of the Commonwealth at the Hotel Cecil, London. In replying to them Sir E. Barton said—

He confessed that he was formerly an opponent of the movement, but had been converted to its support by observing the results that had attended its adoption. In his practical experience of the working of woman suffrage he had not found one of the evils which it had been predicted would attend its adoption. As to the future of the movement in the United Kingdom, he was not entitled to discuss matters relating to the internal politics of the country ; still what might be said about the results of the working of woman suffrage in other parts of the world might serve to dispel some of the doubts and fears which many felt as to the granting of woman suffrage. He was not called upon in the position he had taken on the question to show that woman suffrage bestowed enormously great advantages upon the community at large. What is was necessary to show was that as the thing was logically correct it ought to be granted, unless evil was likely to follow in its train. That was the position of practical statesmanship in the matter.

CHAPTER IV

FEDERATION[1]

"On one mid-winter day—to be quite exact, on the 15th June 1889—I sat with Sir Henry Parkes in his room at the Colonial Secretary's Office. The weekly Executive Council was just over, and the glorious winter sun was shining over the big Moreton Bay fig-trees, and lighting up the harbour where the British warships were riding lazily at anchor. . . . Sir Henry then said, 'I could confederate these colonies in twelve months.' 'Then why don't you do it?' said I; 'it would be a glorious finish to your life.'"

Lord Carrington, who tells this story, was Governor of New South Wales in 1889, and Sir Henry Parkes was Prime Minister. It is easy to picture the conversation—the dreamy boast of the old opportunist, drawled out in his reedy voice, and the quick, highly

[1] Authorities.—*The Commonwealth of Australia Constitution Bill* (with debates and appendices)—London, Wyman and Sons, 1900; Official Records of the Proceedings of the National Australasian Convention, 1891, and the Australasian Federal Convention, 1897, 1898—Government Printers, Sydney, Adelaide, and Melbourne. *The Annotated Constitution of the Australian Commonwealth*, by Quick and Garran, Sydney and Melbourne, 1901, contains a mass of serviceable information, but *The Commonwealth of Australia*, by Harrison Moore, London, 1902, is the best book on the subject. For the objections in New South Wales to the Constitution Bill see the Sydney *Daily Telegraph*, 1898-1899. The attitude of New Zealand is clearly explained in the "Report of the Royal Commission on Federation," N.Z., P.P., 1901. The discussions of the Federal Parliament are to be found set out at great length in the Australian *Hansard*. On the Imperial standpoint see *Education and Empire*, by R. B. Haldane, London, 1902.

practical question of the brisk English peer. The Parkes of 1889 was very different from the gaunt young Chartist who, forty years before, had been the fierce spokesman of the Sydney mob. He was now the drowsy-looking veteran, the Sir 'Enery at whom the *Bulletin* shot its barbed arrows, and whom Phil May caricatured as a white cockatoo. The wild ugliness of the face was made strangely picturesque by snow-white hair and a flowing beard ; you saw a head and visage like those of no other man conceivable—unless you could imagine Danton masquerading as Father Christmas. The demagogue's fire flickered and burned low, but was not yet dead ; there were flashes still, when the rush and coarse strength of his rhetoric could bear down rowdies and sweep crowds with it. It did not do to treat Parkes as a spent volcano : he was still capable of action. To one who did not know him his remark to Lord Carrington might have seemed the mere egotism of a vain old man. Assuredly neither he nor any other leader could have confederated the Australian colonies in twelve months. Parkes, however, could set a force in motion which federated them within twelve years. This he did.

He wrote to Mr. Gillies, the Prime Minister of Victoria, and when that gentleman showed himself doubtful and chilling, turned to Queensland with better success. Then he took the plunge. In a notable speech at Tenterfield (24th October 1889) he declared that the time was come "to set about creating a great national Government for all Australia." It was characteristic of Parkes that he took the new departure without consulting his colleagues. He had long learned that the secret of personal success in politics is to do the right thing at the unexpected moment and in the surprising way. The

difficulty commonly is to hit the right time. In October 1889 Parkes hit it. His Tenterfield speech is usually reckoned the beginning of the final converging movement of the six colonies.

When Parkes thus hoisted the flag, Federation had been talked of for more than forty years, and was still little more than a topic for debating societies. As early as the days when Australia was being parcelled out into separate colonies, there were far-sighted men who thought that there should be some bond of union. The most obviously desirable link seemed to be some sort of Zolleverein. For many years New South Wales and Van Dieman's Land admitted each other's goods free of duty, albeit without warrant of law, and in 1842 the Legislative Council at Sydney passed an Act legalising this custom, and extending the preference to New Zealand. But "Mr. Mother Country" at the Colonial Office disallowed the Act, and—congenial task—snubbed its framers, informing them that Her Majesty's Government decidedly objected in principle to the assumption by colonial legislatures of the office of imposing differential duties on goods. New South Wales submitted, and there was an end of Australasian commercial union. The cold water of official pedantry dripped upon the feeble little flame, and it went out, never to revive.

This was in 1843. In 1847 Earl Grey in a despatch indicated that the Home Government was favourable to Federation. In the same breath, however, he told the Sydney folks that Port Philip was to be severed from the mother colony, and that the form of the constitution at last to be conceded to the Australians was to take a shape which at once roused a storm of opposition. In this Federation was almost overlooked. Yet in 1849 the English Committee on Trade and Plantations, when

reporting on the granting of self-government to the colonies, admitted the need of a "General Assembly of Australia," and sensibly proposed that this body should consist of a single chamber of from twenty to thirty delegates, to legislate on ten topics, of which the first five were customs, the post, railways, lighthouses, marine. The Committee also suggested a general Supreme Court. Accordingly, when the Imperial Act for separating Victoria from New South Wales was introduced in Parliament, it provided for a General Assembly of delegates from four of the six colonies which now compose the Commonwealth. But Australians were not at the moment in a temper to be thankful for any gift from Downing Street, save the one boon of distinct self-government. South Australia protested against the proposal, and certain persons in England feared it as dangerous and republican! It was dropped, and though four years later the colonies suggested that something should be done, Lord John Russell declined to do anything. Thereafter, save the shadowy title of Governor-General (held by the Governor of New South Wales until 1861), nothing remained to show that the Colonial Office had ever dreamed of Federation.

Up to 1889 Federation made no real progress. This seems strange when we note how many prominent Australians spoke and worked for it. Wentworth, Deas-Thomson, and Lang in New South Wales; Gavan Duffy and Service in Victoria, were always Federalists. Duffy, for instance, obtained, at different times, no less than three select committees in the Victorian Parliament to consider the matter. Nothing came of them. Duffy's early adventures as an Irish Nationalist supplied his adversaries with a cheap argument against any Federation instigated by him. Dr. Lang, with more reason,

gave cause for the same objection, for he openly looked forward to separation from the Mother Country as the outcome of Federation, and did some harm thereby. Still, no mistakes of advocacy mattered much; the source of the long delay lay deeper. The truth is that the colonies were absorbed in their local affairs, as they had every reason to be. Their hands were full. Then Protection in Victoria and the Free Trade in New South Wales became, oddly but equally, obstacles to Federation. Each colony sincerely believed that its own fiscal policy paid. The Victorians did not want their manufactures or their farmers interfered with by inter-colonial Free Trade. The Sydney merchants, on the other hand, did not wish to lose the advantage of having the only free port in the seven colonies. They believed that their fine coal-fields would enable Sydney to build up manufactures without any help from Protection. Then there were struggles for border trade—the cheap railway rates with which Victoria tried to attract the Riverina traffic to Melbourne, the "long haul" rates with which the New South Wales railway managers attempted to divert it to Sydney. In truth, there were commercial reasons why the lower Riverina should belong to Victoria and the Broken Hill district to South Australia. The senior colony's frontiers were artificial, and the consciousness that their case in this respect was weak did not make the Old Sydney party easier to negotiate with.

The four minor colonies were made suspicious by the wide gap between their population and that of the two larger. Victoria and New South Wales represented nearly five-sevenths of the population of the future Commonwealth, and quite as great a proportion of the wealth, commerce, efficiency, and organising capacity of the group. South Australia, indeed, produced politicians

of ability; but it may be said fairly of the other smaller colonies that they have turned out only two public men of much note, Sir Samuel Griffith and Sir John Forrest. New Zealand, indeed, standing about midway in importance between Victoria and Queensland, might have filled the gap. But New Zealand lay a thousand miles too far away from Sydney to count. She has always been outside of the Federal circle. Her people have never seriously contemplated coming in; nor have the Australians supposed that they would, or expended much time or trouble in efforts to enlist them.

In 1885, it is true, the colonies got as far as setting up what was called the Federal Council. This was a small legislative body without any executive power, composed of delegates from such of the colonies as might care to be represented on it. It had no revenue and could not spend money. It came into existence chiefly as a demonstration, and was born of the irritation caused by the refusal of the Imperial Government to support Queensland in annexing the eastern half of New Guinea, and of the uneasiness felt at the French penal settlements in New Caledonia. It was empowered to deal with the interests of the colonies in the Pacific and with deep sea fisheries. It might also handle certain subjects of great interest to lawyers and not of much interest to laymen—such as enforcement of judgments, service of process, extradition, and custody of offenders on shipboard. As might be supposed from this, its constitution was drafted by an able barrister, Sir Samuel Griffith. True, the Council might also legislate on any other matters referred to it by the parliaments of the colonies; but colonial legislatures are not disposed to hand over work and power to other bodies. They prefer to do their work them-

selves, or to leave it undone. It is not surprising that the Federal Council failed to excite enthusiasm. Its programme was very reasonable and right, but was not a fighting flag; and that excellent judge of the public temper, Parkes, though actually its originator, shortly refused to have anything to do with it. New South Wales sent no delegate to it. The Council passed one or two meritorious laws about fisheries, and then slowly faded into nothing. By 1889 it was clear that the Australians would not have King Log. Any one might have been excused for supposing that they would have nothing else, and that the day of Federation was yet far off.

This was the moment chosen by Parkes for his bold stroke at Tenterfield. The time was not so unfavourable as others thought it. Railways and telegraphs had been quietly bringing the colonies into closer touch and increasing the impatience felt with tariff partitions. The fate of Free Trade in New South Wales was trembling in the balance. The Protectionists there were growing stronger every year, and indeed were about to capture the colony for a time. On the other hand, the Victorian Protectionist manufacturers were now more than supplying their local market, wanted fresh customers, and felt themselves strong enough to face inter-colonial Free Trade and profit by it. So two great obstacles to Federation were weakening. The rebuff given to Queensland's attempt on New Guinea in 1881, and to New Zealand's proposal to take Samoa a few years later, nettled a certain section of colonists, though the majority were indifferent to them and to expansion in the Pacific. The air of icy superiority persistently worn by the Colonial Office, the Foreign Office, and the Admiralty, when transacting business with separate colonies, did

quite as much, perhaps, to irritate colonial leaders into speculating whether something big—say a federated continent—might not be required to impress the official mind at Home. Since 1885, the conviction had been growing that a common policy of Defence must be resolved and acted upon. In 1888 the colonies agreed to contribute to the maintenance of an Australasian auxiliary naval squadron. In 1889 General Bevan Edwards reported on the military defence of the continent, and stated that Federal organisation was necessary.

Three new and noteworthy influences—which Parkes in 1889 could hardly have foreseen—were also destined to make for Federal union. The first of these was the uneasiness and bewilderment caused by the labour struggle in 1890, and thereafter by the apparition of Labour unfolding revolutionary programmes in the State parliaments. Unquestionably many middle-class politicians turned to Federation as a counter-attraction, and thought to find in it a steadying influence. Next came the bank panic of 1893, followed by a somewhat vague but general notion that Federation would somehow strengthen public credit. Almost at the same time the great gold discoveries in the West drew thither the workless and adventurous from Eastern Australia, almost submerged the older western colonists, and made possible the union of the western with the eastern half of the continent.

Beyond and above all these material or political influences was a powerful sentiment of a high and legitimate kind. Young Australians hungered for unity, for a wider public sphere, for a broader national life. Rightly viewed, public life in the separate colonies need be neither petty nor ignoble. Many of its

struggles, however, are small enough, and are fought out with infinite waste of time and temper on the low level of localism, "that barren plain where every mole-hill is a mountain and every thistle a forest tree." To patriotic Australians Federation seemed to offer membership in a greater and more dignified community; to ambitious youth it opened a brighter career for the talents; to politicians with views, and sick of provincial squabbles, it held out hopes of an alternative to that walking through dry places which often seems like journeying through the weary and waterless scrubs, where you may ride day after day shut in by trees too mean to be interesting and too high to allow you to view the landscape. All these causes were so many centripetal forces between 1889 and 1900, and all were needed to bring about so great a change as Federation. For, as distinct communities, the Australian colonies were free, virtually autonomous, happy, and, one year with another, prosperous. In forty years of self-government they had made great strides forward. A people secure from external attack, with the control of their own affairs in their hands, and with plenty to do, might, one would think, be ready to let well alone. Men, however, are never so well that they do not wish to be better. Mainly for the reasons above given, the Australians gradually resolved to make the great change.

After the Tenterfield speech Parkes once more sounded Gillies, and though the latter was still cool, a conference of delegates nominated by the Governments of the colonies was arranged for, and thirteen delegates, representing the seven colonies, met at Melbourne in February 1890. Though their number was unlucky, their resolutions were unanimous. They

decided that a union of the colonies under one legislature and executive was now justified, and that an Australasian Convention of members elected by the legislatures of the colonies should be appointed to consider and report upon an adequate Federal scheme.

When the Convention was opened at Sydney on 2nd March 1891, it was found that each of the six Australian colonies had sent seven delegates. New Zealand appointed only three, and these were instructed not to bind their colony to anything.

In the Convention, therefore, were more than fifty men, most of them of experience, and some of great ability. Almost all wished well to Federation. So they went to work with a will. Parkes was placed on high as President, and great deference shown to him. Then, after a general discussion, resolutions were passed, the most important of which declared for a uniform customs tariff. Committees were next set up, and to a chief committee was assigned the duty of preparing a Constitution Bill—a weighty task which was, in fact, entrusted to a sub-committee of four—Sir Samuel Griffith, Mr. Barton, Mr. Kingston, and Mr. Clark, a Tasmanian barrister. The quartette secured a peaceful asylum on board the steamer *Lucinda*, and, afloat on the Hawkesbury River, completed their draft on 29th March. The "d" might very well have been dropped out of the name of the vessel with whose aid the Federal constitution thus came to the birth. For the draft of 1891 has been something more than a basis for the actual constitution. The amendments made in it in the years 1897-1900 were neither few nor unimportant; but the close likeness of this first effort to the Statute of 1900 is remarkable. Gossip gives a great share of the credit of the draft of 1891 to the acute and

untiring mind of Griffith. The Convention adopted it with but three changes.

This long step forward was followed by six years of arrest. So much time Australia took to digest the scheme. The Bill was referred to the State Parliaments, and for the most part these bodies dawdled over it, tinkered at it, and dropped it. The public was more favourable; but all thinking men recognised that some of the chief details of the Federal scheme had yet to be threshed out. An extremely clever and complex plan was before the country. The precise meaning and probable effects of portions of it had hardly been grasped. Who would analyse it? How was a common understanding to be reached? The legislatures of the States were absorbed in their own business and conflicts, and could never be expected to devote themselves to perfecting a machine for depriving them of much of their power and most of their prestige. The Labour party of New South Wales, on coming into the field in 1891, incorporated in their programme "Federation on a National and not an Imperialist basis." There were, however, at least two features of the Bill of 1891 which made the Labour parties something more than suspicious of it. The Senate was to be elected by the State Parliaments. This meant a strong infusion of Conservatism: the Upper Houses of the States might be trusted to see to that. Worse still, the franchise for the House of Representatives did not prohibit plural voting. Cockburn, backed up or inspired by Grey, had moved in the Convention to have this done, but had been beaten by twenty-eight votes to nine. That division alone ensured a lengthy postponement of Federation.

Six years passed by. Parkes, Griffith, Service, Clark, and other Federalists fell out of politics. Grey also

retired in 1893. He had gone back to New Zealand from the Convention of 1891, manifestly ready to take in hand the conversion of New Zealand to Federation; but there was no response in the islands. Ballance and the Progressives there had taken the reins in January 1891, a few weeks before the Convention met. They made up their minds that the time had come for New Zealand to cease to play with the question. Their leader met Grey's misty suggestions with an uncompromising declaration, denounced any attempt to impair the Privy Council's powers as an act of hostility to the Empire, and ended a speech which had the merit of decision with these words:

> Looked at, then, from every point of view, the whole weight of the argument is against New Zealand entering into any Federation, except a Federation with the Mother Country.

When, therefore, Grey, after a speech in the House of Representatives in favour of Federation, moved three resolutions so vaguely worded that it was almost impossible to vote against them, the Government party had the House counted out. The broad hint was taken, the subject was allowed to drop, and thereafter for nine years New Zealand was seen no more on the Federal stage.

While Federation was sticking in the Parliamentary mire, a popular movement was gathering force. A strong body, the Australian Natives' Association, took Federation in hand. Presently a Federation League was formed, and quickly became powerful. Together they stirred up a real enthusiasm. Hitherto Federation had been something put forth by a few leaders. When the politicians took it into a bog and left it there, it was for the people to extricate it. Already Parkes had pointed

out the way. In 1892 he had told the Sydney Parliament that they were not elected to deal with the question, but to deal with other questions, and had foreshadowed a national Convention directly chosen by the electors themselves, and empowered to revise the Bill of 1891. A year or so later, at a congress of the friends of Federation, Dr. John Quick gave this hint a practical shape, and added to it the all-important affix that, when the directly elected Convention had settled their Constitution Act, it should be submitted by referendum to the people. Thus the whole task of framing, amending, and ratifying was to be taken away from the dilatory State Parliaments. They would have to be induced to initiate the process by passing enabling Acts—otherwise the Convention with its Bill and the referendum would have no legal force. Once the enabling Acts were passed, the legislators would be reduced to look on, to criticise or to approve. The scheme was very astute. Democrats could hardly oppose handing over so large a national question to the people. The many unbelievers who had been resisting Federation, whilst only professing to object to details, were now fairly caught. They were not organised for election fighting, and the Federalists were; and they had no cry to go to an election with. It was therefore certain that nearly all the delegates to any elected national Convention would be sincere Federalists. That being so, they would be pretty sure to hammer out a basis of agreement, submit a taking constitution to the people, and then energetically support its adoption. Wisely, too, the Federal societies resolved to support the direct election of the Federal Senate by the people of the States, and the entire abolition of plural voting. So the main objections of the Labour parties were met.

There can be little doubt that to this and to Quick's scheme is due the existence of the Commonwealth to-day. The latter turned the flank of the State Parliaments and enlisted the public in the Federal cause. Adopted by Mr. Reid in 1894, and by a conference of Australian premiers in 1895, it bore tangible fruit in 1896. Six Parliaments passed enabling Bills. So a Convention legally elected by the people met at Adelaide in March 1897, and picked up the threads which had been dropped six years before. For a year this Convention—made up of sixty members, ten from each of the six colonies—laboured intermittently at its task of recasting the scheme of 1891. After sitting for a month at Adelaide, it adjourned until September, and then sat in Sydney digesting for three weeks suggestions and criticisms from the State legislatures. Finally, it gathered for a third sitting in Melbourne, and expended almost two months in threshing out the points which repeated discussion had shown to be the most debatable. The chief of these were finance, the control of rivers and railways, and the respective powers of the Upper and Lower Houses of the Federal Parliament. At last, on the 17th March 1898, the constitution was ready.

The battle was not over, however. Indeed, the one really brisk fight over Federation was yet to come. Its scene was not to be Western Australia, where the goldfields vote easily carried the day, though the older settlers managed to put off the hour of decision to the last moment—until July 1900, that is. Nor was the tussle to come in lukewarm, divided Queensland; for there the contest (deferred until 1899), though not uneven, was but a lackadaisical affair. The real struggle was in New South Wales. By 1898 it was pretty clear that, however much some provinces of the continent might

profit by Federation, the Sydney division of the mother colony would lose. Free Trade and Federation could not dwell together; the smaller States were to control the Senate; and it was certain that the seat of government would not be Sydney. That the sceptre of commerce should pass away from their beautiful seaport was a bitter thought to the Sydney folks. They braced themselves for a genuine effort to defeat the Constitution Bill at the referendum. Over Australia the tide was now running strongly for Federation, and nearly every well-known politician had declared for it. One point, however, was in favour of the Sydney dissentients; to pass the Bill in their colony an affirmative vote of at least 80,000 was by law required. Thus, though they could hardly hope to win right out, they could play for a draw. It was an uphill game for them, but in politics as on the cricket field Australians know how to play an uphill game. Finding an able organ in the Sydney *Daily Telegraph*, they set themselves to flood the colony with caustic criticisms, not of Federation, but of the financial and fiscal outlook under it. The parties for and against the Bill were decorated with the names of Billites and Anti-Billites. For nearly three months the struggle was warm, and the position taken by Mr. Reid, the Prime Minister, gave piquancy to the interest stirred up. As a delegate to the Convention, he had been one of the framers of the Bill, and had played the prominent part that his abilities and position entitled him to take, fighting sturdily for New South Wales, and getting much, though by no means all, that he asked for. He went home in March to find Sydney in a ferment, and many of his best friends very angry. After a brief dramatic pause he spoke his mind to a great public

meeting. In this, his famous "Yes—No" speech, after keenly criticising the Bill, he announced his intention, as a loyal member of Convention, to vote for it. His review, however, had furnished excellent reasons why other people should vote against it. It need not be assumed that he was anything but simply genuine in this. I believe he meant to be perfectly honest. Had he been in England, where there are newspapers equal to the task of finding explanations for politicians, all might have been well. But the Australian mind does not take readily to subtleties at fighting time; it prefers leaders who are on the one side or the other, and who speak plainly, the louder the better. Billites thought that Mr. Reid was trying to spoil some one's game; to Anti-Billites he seemed merely to be sitting on a rail. Both sides cursed him roundly, while, wrapping himself in his virtue, he left them to fight it out. The Anti-Billites unquestionably showed that the scheme of Federal finance was not one likely to be palatable to New South Wales merchants and taxpayers; they convinced the public that it meant at once more taxation and the doom of Free Trade; they made the Braddon Blot look black and large; and contrived to make at least a show of proving that while the other States would sway the Commonwealth, New South Wales would have to "foot the bill." In and near Sydney their arguments prevailed, and had their platform speakers been as able as their penmen, they might have carried the colony. As it was, 66,000 votes were given against the adoption of the Bill, and the majority for it was but a little over 5000. As the vote for it was less than the 80,000 required by the enabling Act, the Anti-Billites scored a Pyrrhic victory.

Meanwhile the Bill had been adopted by swamping

majorities in Victoria, South Australia, and Tasmania. Matters could not rest there. It was time for Mr. Reid. He came forward, and managed to induce the other Premiers to meet him in a last conference. Certain concessions were made to render the Bill a little less disagreeable to Sydney, and it was agreed that a second referendum in all the colonies should be taken on the Bill as thus amended. To say that either Mr. Reid or his concessions were cordially welcomed by the Anti-Billites when he returned to Sydney would be kindly, but untrue. Stubbornly unconverted, the dissentients girded themselves for another trial of strength. Once more they struggled hard. But it was a struggle of despair. Reid was now actively against them; he is Australia's best platform speaker; and with Barton and Wise he roused the country. The polling was much heavier than at the first referendum. Nearly 83,000 votes were given against the Bill; but the majority for it was 24,879, and the beaten Anti-Billites grimly accepted the result as final. Two months later Queensland found her way into Federation, and West Australia followed eleven months after Queensland. So by August 1900 the six colonies were engaged to federate. Three of their important subdivisions had been hostile or evenly divided—Sydney with its environs, Southern Queensland, and the farming districts of Western Australia. Everywhere else the affirmative vote had been overwhelming. In all 422,788 Australians voted for the momentous step, and only 161,077 against it. The decision could hardly have been clearer.

Between the victory in New South Wales and the coming in of Western Australia the Federalists had another stream to ford. Their constitution had to be enacted by the Imperial Parliament. It was inevitable

that the Home Government should object to clause 74 of the Bill—that by which the proposed High Court of Australia was made the final authority on all law points affecting the constitution. The Colonial Office had already protested against this, and when the Bill with its covering Act was brought into the House of Commons it was found that the final jurisdiction of the Queen-in-Council had been maintained. Then followed a tussle between the Government delegates of four of the Federating colonies, who were watching over the Bill in London, and Mr. Chamberlain. Opinion in the Empire outside Australia was, on the whole, with Mr. Chamberlain, and in Australia it was much divided. The Imperial Government, however, was indisposed to press the point very far. In the end it was left to the Federal High Court to allow, if so minded, appeals on constitutional points of especial importance to be taken to the Privy Council. The Mother Country also stipulated that any measure passed by the Federal Parliament to further impair the right of appeal must be reserved by the Governor-General for the Sovereign's consideration. With this proviso the Bill became law, and was brought into operation on the first day of the twentieth century.

The Commonwealth of Australia Constitution Act is a bulky statute, divided into eight parts, and containing one hundred and twenty-eight sections and a schedule. As Acts of Parliament go, its clauses are clearly and almost tersely worded, though there are certain repetitions, and the division of the subject-matter might be improved. Most of the sections are short; the fifty-first is an exception, for it contains thirty-nine subsections. The brief covering Act consists of nine clauses only. In one respect the Commonwealth Constitution

Act will probably differ from all other well-known colonial laws—it is not likely to be overlaid with amending Acts before it has been half-a-dozen years in working. To amend it will be no light matter.

The preamble declares that the Commonwealth is indissoluble, and that the people of the federating colonies unite in it, "humbly relying on the blessing of Almighty God." The colonies receive the name of States, and those which entered the Federation on the 1st of January 1901 (Inauguration Day) are termed Original States.

The Constitution is arranged in eight chapters. The first deals with the Federal Parliament, which is to consist of the Sovereign, the Senate, and the House of Representatives. Happy as the law's framers were in selecting the good English word Commonwealth, they were hardly as judicious in their choice of other names. Any historical association or significance in "Senate" certainly does not fit in with a body of men, none of whom need be more than twenty-one years of age, and who are elected under one-man-one-vote and one-adult-one-vote franchises. "House of Representatives," again, is not specially suitable to one house of a parliament where both Chambers are elected by the people, and both with the same broad franchise. And it seems a pity that the fine old word Colony has been discarded in favour of State. But names, after all, are minor matters.

The Sovereign is represented in the Commonwealth by a Governor-General, to be paid a salary of ten thousand a year. He is commander-in-chief of the Commonwealth's military and naval forces. He may summon Parliament at such times as he thinks fit, and prorogue or dissolve it; but there must be at

least one session yearly, and not more than twelve months may intervene between any two sessions.

Each State is to send six Senators to Parliament, and no alteration of the constitution may reduce this number, or make the contingents of the six original States unequal. The Senate, then, may be enlarged but may not be made smaller. States which may be hereafter admitted will have to make the best bargain they can for a share of representation. In electing Senators, as in electing Representatives, there is to be no plural voting. At first, until the Federal Parliament should pass a uniform franchise law, the franchise in each State was to be that in use there for the Lower House of the State legislature. This meant that in Queensland the Federal franchise was more democratic than that of the State, for the latter provides for plural voting; and hence it came about that the Federal Parliament was seen voting for the expulsion of the Kanaka labour, which the State Parliament had admitted.[1] When choosing its Senators each State is one electorate, though a special power is reserved for Queensland to create districts for the purpose. Senators sit for six years, half of them retiring at the end of every third year. What the practical utility of this arrangement is I am not able to see. The qualifications and pay of a Senator are the same as those of a Representative. Each receives £400 a year; each must be an elector, or be qualified to be registered as an elector; each must be a British subject who has resided not less than three years in the Commonwealth. The Speaker of the Senate is called President, and may vote on all questions. In that he differs from the Speaker of the Lower House,

[1] In 1902 the Parliament of the Commonwealth passed a law making the Federal franchise uniform.

who has only a casting vote. The disqualification clause applying to candidates or members of either House is of the ordinary kind with one exception. This is, that no such person may have a pecuniary interest, direct or indirect, in any agreement with the Public Service made by any incorporated company, unless the company consists of more than twenty-five persons.

The Senate represents the States, the House of Representatives the people. The House is rather more than twice as large as the Senate; its constituencies are single-member districts; its members are elected for three years only; and all money bills must originate in it.

The proportion of Representatives chosen in each State is as follows:—

New South Wales . .	26	South Australia . .	7
Victoria . . .	23	Western Australia .	5
Queensland . . .	9	Tasmania . . .	5

Just now there are seventy-five Representatives to thirty-six Senators. In future the House is to be as nearly as practicable twice the size of the Senate. The population of the Commonwealth will be divided into seventy-two parts, each of which will be a quota with the right to elect one member. No original State, however, is ever to have less than five members. The aborigines of any State are not to be reckoned in ascertaining its electoral population—a proviso which would probably be modified if New Zealand were to become a State.

The Senate may not amend taxing or appropriation Bills; but may return any Bill to the House with a message suggesting amendments. Moreover, the House may not "tack" other matters on to money Bills.

Generally speaking, the powers of the two Houses are equal. In the event of a disagreement between them over a Bill passed by the Lower Chamber, the House must first wait three months. Then it may pass the disputed Bill a second time, and, in case the Senate again insists on opposing it, the Governor-General may dissolve both Houses simultaneously. Supposing the disagreement to continue in the newly-elected Houses, there is to be a joint sitting. Thereat the vote of an absolute majority may settle the matter and pass the law. The smallest absolute majority of the present parliament would be fifty-six. It will be noted that a block vote from Victoria and New South Wales in alliance could secure this; but that a block vote from New South Wales and Queensland could not.

By clause 51, Parliament is to have power to make laws with respect to trade and commerce; taxation (in which it must not discriminate between States); uniform bounties on export and production; public borrowing; posts and telegraphs; defence, including the control of railways for military purposes; lighthouses, quarantine, and fisheries; statistics and meteorological observations; currency (paper or other), coinage, banking, insurance, bills of exchange and promissory notes, weights and measures, corporations (foreign or domestic), and bankruptcy; naturalisation; marriage, divorce, and guardianship; the execution and enforcement of State laws, and the processes and judgments of State courts; the influx of criminals; immigration and emigration.

Subsection 26 of the same clause gives power to make laws dealing with any people, not aborigines, for whom it is deemed necessary to make special laws.

Subsection 23 empowers Parliament to provide invalid and old age pensions; and 35 to pass a conciliation

and arbitration law touching any industrial disputes that may extend beyond the limits of one State.

Subsections 29 and 30 include external affairs and the relations of the Commonwealth with the islands of the Pacific.

Other sub-clauses of clause 51 contemplate the acquisition and construction of railways in any State with the assent of the State concerned; and legislation on matters referred to the Federal Parliament by one or more States.

Clause 52 gives the Parliament authority to deal with the seat of government, with all places acquired for public purposes, and with Federal departments.

The provisions relating to the Royal assent or disallowance of Bills are those customary in colonial constitutions, except that in only one hypothetical case is the Governor-General expressly ordered to reserve a Bill for the Sovereign's consideration. In all other cases the constitution leaves him discretion. The usual clause excepting cases that may be named in a Governor's instructions is conspicuous by its absence. The same latitude is therefore given to the Governor-General of Australia as to the Governor-General of Canada.

Chapter II. provides that the advisers of the Governor-General shall be the members of the Federal Executive Council. Such of the Executive Councillors as are charged with departments shall be Ministers of State. All hold office during the Governor-General's pleasure. The Ministers number seven, and their salaries are paid out of a lump sum of £12,000 a year. No Minister without a seat in Parliament may hold office for more than three months. Otherwise the constitution is silent as to the exact responsibility of Ministers to Parliament, or to each Chamber. Clause

69 regulates the transfer from States to Commonwealth of the departments of customs and excise; post telegraphs and telephones; defence; lighthouses and quarantine.

Chapter III. relates to the Judicature. A High Court of Australia is to be established, consisting of a Chief Justice and two or more other judges. Parliament may also establish other Federal Courts. The High Court may hear appeals from any other Federal Courts, or from the Supreme Courts of the States. Its peculiar function is to be the determination of constitutional disputes between the Commonwealth and the States, or between the States themselves. The famous clause 74 directs that in these cases no appeal from the High Court to the Privy Council is to be granted unless the High Court itself certifies that there is special reason for allowing it. Except in these matters of constitutional law, however, the present right of appeal to London is to remain unaltered until the Federal Parliament shall pass an Act restricting it. Any such limiting Act must be reserved by the Governor-General for His Majesty's pleasure.

The High Court has original jurisdiction in suits in which the Commonwealth is a party; in Inter-State cases of various kinds; in cases affecting representatives of other countries, or the Commonwealth's officers in their public capacity; and in cases arising under treaty. Furthermore, Parliament may confer original jurisdiction on it in any matter arising under the constitution and involving its interpretation, or arising under any laws of the Commonwealth.

The Fourth Chapter is headed "Finance and Trade." Section 87 is the famous "Braddon Blot." Under it, for ten years after the customs and excise are taken over

by the Federal authority, only one-fourth of the net revenue therefrom is to be spent by the Commonwealth. The remaining three-fourths is to be handed back to the States. The next section, 88, requires Parliament to impose uniform customs duties within two years after the establishment of the Commonwealth. Upon this all inter-commerce becomes absolutely free. During the ten years just mentioned Parliament may grant financial assistance to any State on such terms as it thinks fit.

It is enacted that the power to make laws relating to trade and commerce extends to navigation and shipping and to State-owned railways, and may include the forbidding of any preference or discriminating rate granted by State railway-managers. A preference, however, may only be prohibited when it is undue or unreasonable.

Who is to decide whether it is so or not? Sections 101 and 102 furnish the answer. They authorise the setting up of an Inter-State Commission to execute and maintain the Commonwealth's laws in respect to trade and commerce. Under this head, a section—of great importance in Australia—prescribes that the residents in any State are not to be deprived of the reasonable use of the water of rivers for conservation or irrigation. The Inter-State Commissioners are to be appointed for seven years, and may not be removed during that time save on an address of both Houses; nor may their salaries be altered.

The fifth division of the constitution defines the position of the States. The Parliaments of these are to retain all powers not exclusively vested in the Commonwealth by the Constitution Act. Amongst these exclusive powers coinage, the issue of paper money, and the maintenance of any naval or military force are

expressly mentioned. When the laws of the Commonwealth conflict with those of a State the former are to prevail. The Commonwealth is to protect States against foreign invasion, and (on the application of the State's Executive) against domestic violence.

The Sixth Chapter authorises the Federal Parliament to admit new States upon such terms as it thinks fit; also to make laws for the government of any territory handed over to it—as, for example, New Guinea has been. Parliament may also cut up States, alter their boundaries, or carve new States out of them, but only with the consent of the Parliaments of the States concerned.

Chapter Seven is headed "Miscellaneous." It empowers Parliament to acquire an area of not less than one hundred square miles—in New South Wales, but at least one hundred miles from Sydney—to be the seat of the Government of the Commonwealth. All Crown land in this site is to be handed over by New South Wales without payment. Until Parliament meets at the new capital it is to sit at Melbourne.

Finally, the Eighth Chapter lays down the conditions under which the constitution may be amended. Amending Acts are to be passed by absolute majorities in both Federal Chambers. Then they are to be submitted to the vote of the people, and, to become law, must be adopted by a majority of the States and a majority of the total number of voters. The second stipulation made it necessary to distinguish between the States where women's franchise is law and the others. In computing the mass vote of the Commonwealth, the number voting in the States where both sexes have the franchise was to be halved. This rough-and-ready method of redressing the balance is, however,

no longer necessary. Women's franchise has now been incorporated in the general suffrage law of the Commonwealth.

When one Federal House twice passes an amendment of the constitution, and the other as often refuses to do so, the proposal is referred to the people, together with any amendments made by the hostile chamber.

The Australians justly claim that amendment of the constitution is easier in their case than in that of the United States, where a three-fifths majority is required in Congress, and where three-quarters of the States must support any change before it can be made. Still, a small minority might block constitutional reform even in Australia. A majority in the three smallest States could do so. These three—South Australia, West Australia, and Tasmania—contain, at present, some 700,000 people out of the 3,800,000 who inhabit the Commonwealth. A vote, therefore, representing 400,000 (less than one-ninth of the whole population) could resist any alteration; and an alliance between the three States named against the others may not impossibly be entered into in the event of any attack upon the powers of the Senate. Such an attack, however, is unlikely to be made, for some years at any rate.

The Federal system defined in the Constitution Act is wanting neither in complexity nor interest, in features of originality nor in marks of care. The central power dominates less than in Canada, while of the personal rule which is so strong a feature in the United States and Germany there is no trace. The Governor-General is no elected administrator,—much less is he a transient Chairman as in Switzerland,— but a constitutional king's viceroy. The Federal Government does not, as in Canada, overshadow State legislatures or nominate

State governors; nor do the State legislators appoint part of the Federal Parliament as in the United States. The Commonwealth's Parliament is not connected with the State machinery. Responsible ministers sit in Parliament, and in practice form a cabinet constructed by the Prime Minister; in that the Commonwealth differs from any foreign federation. Large powers are left to the States—their railways, the management and settlement of their great landed estates, most of the work of social reform (including licensing), industrial regulation, public education, and police. On the other hand, the militia is under the Commonwealth. In making the High Court of Justice supreme constitutional arbiter, the Australians have copied the United States; and the influence of certain of the many active lawyers (Griffith, Kingston, Clark, Symon, Barton, Deakin, Isaacs, Wise, Quick, Turner, Reid, Baker) who helped to frame the constitution is to be traced in this as in other significant features. The referendum from Parliament to the people of any proposed amendment of the constitution is borrowed from Switzerland.

The constitution is an effort to reconcile two inconsistent principles—the personal equality which is the basis of democracy, with the political equality of six federating States. The Australian States are unequal in value and unlikely ever to be equal. Yet, to tempt the smaller States into a union, each had to be given as great a voice in the Senate as New South Wales, and also a handicap in the Lower Chamber. In framing the constitution, one State had as much to say as another; and undoubtedly the large colonies paid a heavy price for Union. The attempt to reconcile with democratic principles this enormous concession to minorities has led to the setting up of a Senate elected

with the widest franchise used for any Upper Chamber in the world. No part of the constitution was more thoroughly threshed out than that concerning the powers of this Senate to delay or oppose the Lower House, to initiate measures, or interfere with money bills. Nowhere was the spirit of compromise more needed; fortunately, nowhere was it more wisely brought into play. In finance we see another struggle and another compromise. The fixing and collection of much the largest portion of the taxation has been entrusted to the Commonwealth. Something had to be done to assure the finance of the States; so a series of expedients to restrict the discretion of the Commonwealth in spending money and distributing revenue amongst the States was discussed, analysed, reviewed, amended, and abandoned. Finally, the odd stipulation nick-named the Braddon Blot was agreed to. Then that was fiercely attacked, and at the last moment its life was limited to ten years. In the same way the sections relating to railways and rivers are simply compromises, the outcome of much hard bargaining. Even the clause restricting appeals from the High Court to the Privy Council is a compromise arrived at after a notable controversy, in which the clause, after being substantially amended in Australia, was twice altered in England.

The controversies over the Senate rank amongst the interesting constitutional debates of our time. The Senate, be it remembered, represents a local and not a class or conservative minority. The smaller States wished to give it the right to amend money bills; in the end it was given the right to "suggest" amendments thereto. Then came the battle over the remedy for deadlocks, a word which is used in Australia for any prolonged struggle between Upper and Lower Houses.

One set of theorists wanted disputes settled by dissolution, another by referendum, a third by a joint sitting of House and Senate. But was the referendum to be to States, or to the electors as one people? Then, if dissolution was to be the cure, was it to be a simultaneous dissolution of both Houses, or was the Lower to be dissolved first and the Upper only as a last resort after further disagreement? Again, if recourse was to be had to a joint sitting, was the verdict there to be that of a simple majority, or of three-fifths of those voting? At length, as we have seen, the referendum was rejected, and a blend of the first and third remedy was decided upon. The Senate, therefore, cannot inflict upon the House the penalty of dissolution without itself suffering in the same way. When both disputants are thus sent to the country, the same electors will have to deal with both, and the situation will be not a little curious.

The financial battle owed its heat to the special importance of customs and excise to Australian treasuries. Some £8,000,000 was collected in 1900 under these heads in the States of the Commonwealth. Only one other branch of revenue, the gross railway returns, yields more, and no other branch of taxation nearly as much. A uniform tariff coming together with the abolition of inter-colonial duties might upset the finances of any State. A tariff, for instance, producing £2 : 10s. per head of population would be too little for a colony where the fiscal revenue before federation had been £3 : 5s., while it would increase taxation in a colony where the average had been £2. Moreover, to distribute revenue on a strict basis of population might be manifestly unfair to States where, even under the uniform Federal tariff, the duties collected turned out to be much

larger per head than in other States. Therefore it was in the end decided to resort to a strict system of book-keeping. Each State is credited with the customs revenue collected therein, and treated as entitled thereto after costs of administration and a share of the Commonwealth's requirements have been deducted. This, it is clear, must lead to some very troublesome adjusting. It is, however, to be the system in use for five years. Next, any tariff fixed so as to suit the needs of some States must be high. During the debates in the Conventions this was foreseen. It explains the uneasiness of New South Wales where the tariff—even as a revenue tariff—had been low. High tariffs in the colonies always involve Protection; no Government can count on sympathy for a tariff which involves heavy taxation and yet respects Free Trade.

Finally, the Conventions had to face the question —how much of the Customs and Excise money was to stick in the Commonwealth's fingers? How much was to be handed over to the States? There came in the Braddon clause. Yet no sooner had the Convention restricted the Commonwealth's share to one-fourth than it was seen that this would in all human probability make a high tariff inevitable. The Federal treasurer would take care to make his fourth a large fourth. Hence the fierce attack on the Braddon Blot by the Free Traders of Sydney.[1]

The wrangle over river rights arose from the direction taken by half the streams of New South Wales and

[1] In the first complete financial year of the Commonwealth the new expenditure caused by Federation came to £344,000. Of the whole revenue, customs and excise yielded £8,900,000. The returns for the year are as under:—

Revenue in 1901-1902	£11,304,800
Expenditure	3,931,300
Returned to the States	£7,373,500

Victoria. They flow into South Australia. Water is as precious in Australia as sunshine is in Ireland, and upon its conservation and its use in irrigation much of the continent's future will turn. Yet South Australia has some claim not to have her water supply arbitrarily cut off, or the trade of her river steamers stopped. These conflicting State demands are to be watched by the Inter-State Commission, which will also have to decide when cheap railway rates are fair enterprise, and when they are unfair attempts to cut out competing lines of a neighbour State.[1]

The constitution and its first-fruits already supply more than one paradox. A democracy supposed to be one of the most advanced in the world has set up a very powerful second Chamber. A majority of Senators represent a minority of the people; less than one-third of the Australians elect two-thirds of the Senators. Yet the franchise for this Upper House is so liberal that the Senators for Queensland are chosen by a more democratic vote than is the Lower House of that State. The Federal Parliament is to fix the customs tariff and collect it, but may not, for ten years, spend more than a fourth of it. It controls half the revenue of the States, yet may not interfere with their expenditure,

[1] The following report (cut from an Australian newspaper) of a question and answer in the Federal Parliament shows how it is proposed to use the Inter-State Commission:—

Mr. Thomas (N.S.W.) to-day directed the attention of the Attorney-General to certain preferential rates prevailing in South Australia. He said that on South Australian bacon sent from Adelaide to Broken Hill £1 : 17 : 7 was charged; while the article from Victoria, New South Wales, and New Zealand had to pay £5 : 14 : 5. Cheese from Adelaide paid £1 : 17 : 7 per ton to Broken Hill, but for the same distance the product from the other States had to pay £4 : 12s. per ton. Mr. Thomas wanted to know if it was legal under the Constitution Act for any Government to charge preferential rates.

Mr. Deakin replied that a law must be passed first by the Commonwealth prohibiting the preference, and it could only be enforced on the finding of the Inter-State Commission. It showed the necessity of passing the Inter-State Commission Bill, as, until it was passed, there were no means of reaching such cases as this.

and is not responsible for their debts. It does not own or manage the State railways, yet may regulate them to an extent at present uncertain. Australian unity has been hailed as a forward step towards Imperial Federation. Its first immediate result, however, has been to erect a fiscal barrier outside of Sydney, and to diminish, however slightly, the prestige and jurisdiction of the Empire's chief court of appeal. Finally, the Commonwealth boasts of a written constitution; the legal mind has done its best to define its powers, duties, and scope. He must be a sanguine man, however, who does not see ahead of it uncertainties, doubts, and surprises, and much work for the jurists.

The best answer to all this may be given in four words. Federation is a compromise. Compromises when at all elaborate usually contain paradoxes, on paper. It is supposed to be the Englishman's peculiar and most useful public characteristic that he understands the virtues of compromise, and will abide by a tolerable arrangement, however illogical it may seem. In practice no very serious duel between the larger and smaller Australian States is likely to be witnessed for some years at least, and sufficient for the day are the problems thereof.

The fate of Sydney is, after all, a local episode. The city and the district round it have profited in past years because Sydney has been the one free port in the continent. Its merchants could hardly have expected to convert five more or less Protectionist colonies to their way of thinking; nor if they did, and if Australia adopted Free Trade, would Sydney retain its peculiar advantage—it would be but one of many free ports. Federation meant inevitably that Sydney must step down from her coign of vantage. The people of New South Wales, knowing this, yet voted for Federation with their

eyes open. It was their own business, and in imposing a protectionist tariff now the Australians are within their rights. However disagreeable the closing of Sydney may be to British and New Zealand merchants, it is hardly a blow to the Imperial idea.

The endeavour to withhold constitutional cases from the Privy Council is a very different matter. There are those who think that the Mother Country can do no better service to the widely divided branches of our race than to provide them with a high and not too dilatory Imperial court of final appeal. Desirable as this may be in specially important private suits, it seems more desirable still when conflicting claims of large public bodies or localities are to be weighed. It might have been thought that the Australians would have been pleased, if not proud, to appoint the best intellects of the Empire to be umpires in disputes between the Commonwealth and its States. As it is, it is pretty certain that when feeling runs high the States will chafe under decisions of Federal judges. There are many Australians—and these not the least thoughtful —who admit this.

For more than a year the Constitution has been getting to work. A strong ministry and a popular Governor-General were a good beginning, and the people responded by electing a Parliament of undoubted quality. The capture by Labour of nearly one-fourth of the seats in both Houses has given a *coup de grâce* to fears that the Commonwealth would be a machine for the repression of democracy. On the whole, the wheels of the State coach run smoothly enough. The exclusive departments—fiscal, postal, military, marine, external affairs—have been easily transferred from the States. How well Australia is safeguarded from external

troubles and anxieties is shown by the eighteen months which have quietly been allowed to elapse without the appointment of a representative of the Commonwealth in London. On the other hand, the intense irritation expressed by Queensland at the proposed exclusion of black labour from her sugar-fields is a foretaste of the kind of disagreement with State governments that is to be looked for. The taking over of New Guinea and the Northern Territory will give the Commonwealth a considerable estate of its own. The project of a trans-continental railway from South Australia to Perth is an instance of the large—and expensive—schemes in which adventurous minds will be anxious to involve the new Government.

Pessimists predict an abundant and early crop of troubles for the young Commonwealth. Of many of their prophecies I think little. I do not believe, for instance, that the Senate will be mainly filled with rich Conservatives, that the coloured labour problem is insoluble, or that the large States will utterly refuse to endure the preponderance of the smaller in the Upper Chamber. I do fear, however, that the Australian tax-payers will find Federation a somewhat costly luxury. They look to make great economies in their State governments. Small savings they will effect: South Australia has reduced the size of her two State Houses. Great economies I shall believe in when I see them. It is impossible for a New Zealander to forget that when the provincial councils were abolished in New Zealand in 1876, it was done in the name of economy, yet the cost of government soon trebled. The Australians have, so far, abolished nothing, though the Tasmanian Government proposes to amalgamate its two State Houses; they have but added two legislative

chambers and a viceroy to the twelve chambers and the six governors they had already. The shadow of militarism also betokens a financial danger; as yet it is but a shadow.

The other main difficulty is geographical. Australia is a strange continent. Its settlements are in truth an irregular circle of insulated communities lying round a vast and hopeless inland desert. Victoria, New South Wales, and Queensland may very slowly be joined. Even then they will form a riband of settlement two thousand miles long, and, on the average, one hundred and fifty miles broad. South Australia and Western Australia are large oases, eternally divided from the others; and Tasmania has an Irish Sea between it and Victoria. These divisions need not mean disruption, much less civil war. They must lead to clashing interests, jealousies, local ignorance, and constant friction.

Where the Commonwealth's best hope lies is apparent to any one on reading the debates of the Federal Conventions. In the eleven years of speech-making and article-writing which followed the Tenterfield pronouncement not many noteworthy phrases were coined or memorable sentences uttered. Sir Henry Parkes began well with "the crimson thread of kinship which runs through us all," and Mr. Barton did better with "A nation for a continent and a continent for a nation." "One people, one destiny" is at any rate brief. Mr. Reid likened Free Trade Sydney going into partnership with five Protectionist colonies to a "teetotaller setting up house with five drunkards." Mr. Reid declared that Federal control of the Murray River system meant turning New South Wales into "a catchment area for South Australia." Mr. Reid also

was unlucky enough in the course of the Federal battle to have the nickname of "Yes—No" fixed upon him, to his very great damage. Some New South Welshman it was who alliteratively damned the well-known financial clause with "Braddon Blot." Sir John Hall summed up the position of New Zealand tersely when he said that "twelve hundred obstacles to Federation will always be found between Australia and New Zealand." The same speaker observed that "Democracy demands that government should be carried on in the sight and in the hearing of the people"—a saying which may come to be recalled when the Federal capital has been chosen and the Federal Parliament meets there in peaceful remoteness from cities. For eleven years this is not a large sheaf of good sayings. A French convention would turn out more epigrams in eleven weeks.

The Australians, however, in their discussions, did much better than make phrases: they talked business. No one who reads the debates of their conventions can avoid being impressed with the evidences of a high average of practical ability. The coolest, least enthusiastic onlooker must be struck with the clearness, commonsense, and argumentative power, not of a handful of leading speakers only, but of many. Delegates took their task seriously, as they well might. The reader notes the widespread sense of responsibility, the real desire to rise to a great occasion[1]; he notes, too, a progressive improvement as the constitution-makers get to close

[1] Sir William Russell thus described to the New Zealand Parliament his impression of the Australians at work in the Convention of 1891 :—

The most noticeable feature of the Convention was the careful and deliberate consideration given to all points, the earnest desire on the part of every member to give his whole thought, interest, and attention to the work. The discussions were not heated. There was calm deliberation and acute reasoning, and, more especially in committee, careful attention to every detail. . . . No triumph was exhibited: the most marked courtesy was shown by the victors.

quarters with special difficulties. There is less talk of crimson threads and mighty moats, less declaiming of copy-book platitudes, less importing of spread-eagle American sentimentalities. When the debaters come to dissect proposals in respect to deadlocks, finance, constitutional amendments, rivers, railways, and trade, they show themselves keen analysts and shrewd reasoners. But though hard bargainers (for in truth their business was to strike a Great Bargain), the key-note of their proceedings is found in the spirit of compromise. It is not the shapely ideal, but the tolerable *modus vivendi* that they are content to aim at. They give and take in a remarkable way, are good-tempered, impersonal, and anxious to co-operate. It is true that they are dealing with hypotheses and not with facts—are constructing a machine, not using it. Still, a people capable of such a display of reason and self-control must have no small reserve-store of strength and sagacity. In that lies the best hope that their Federal machine may be worked with success, and that, when the unexpected happens, the statesmen of the Commonwealth will find a way through entanglements, or make one.

CHAPTER V

PREFERENTIAL VOTING[1]

THOUGH John Stuart Mill was not the only thoughtful man in England who supported Mr. Hare's electoral system, or something like it, and though it has found many believers and clever advocates in the colonies, it has for the most part been rejected by the common-sense or prejudice of the practical politician and average elector. Queensland, however, without adopting the Hare system, or anything so complex, has obviously taken a hint therefrom. Since 1892 the Queensland elector has had the right of using what is called the contingent vote. This is simply the "order of preference" of Mr. Hare. It is called into play in order to assert the principle of election by absolute majority. In single-member constituencies the elector votes for one man in the ordinary way. Against the names of any other he may write the figures 2, 3, and so on. If, then, there are three or more candidates, and the highest

[1] AUTHORITIES.—Acts of the Parliament of Queensland, 1891; Acts of the Parliament of Tasmania, 1896; *An Election under the Hare-Clark System*, by Herbert Nicholls, Hobart, 1899; *Further Observations on the Hare-Clark System*, by R. M. Johnston, Government Statistician, Tasmania; *Brief Explanation relating to Voting under the Electoral Bill of 1899*, by W. Jethro Brown; "The Hare-Clark System of Voting" (Report by Returning Officer and the Statistician of Tasmania, an official paper of the Commonwealth, 1901); New Zealand *Hansard*, 1889, vol. lxiv., Debate on Representation Bill; Commonwealth *Hansard*, January, February, March 1902.

at the poll has not secured an absolute majority, the contingent vote is used to help the electors to arrive at a fair decision between the two first on the polling. Let A, B, C be candidates, and let us suppose that A receives 1000 votes, B, 800, and C, 400. No use is made of the contingent votes on the ballot-paper in favour of A or B, but the contingent votes on C's paper are counted, and according as they are given to A or B, are added to A's or B's original votes. Thus C's supporters are saved from throwing away their votes, and the choice of all the electors between A and B is clearly made. Should there be more than three candidates, the contingent votes are counted on all ballot-papers, except those given for the first two.

In two-member districts the process is similar. At the first recount no notice is taken of contingent votes on the papers of the four candidates highest on the poll. It may, however, happen that, when the contingent votes from the ballot-papers of the other candidates have been divided amongst these four, only one man is found to have an absolute majority. In that case number four is treated as a beaten candidate. The contingent votes on his ballot-papers are divided between two and three, and one of the pair is declared winner. So much did the framers of this law dread complexity that they specially stipulated that it was not to be applied to any electorate entitled to return more than two members. It is claimed that the effect of the contingent vote is to do the work of a second ballot without the delay, worry, and expense of a second election. It is said both to diminish the chance of a minority scoring in a three-cornered fight, and to discourage attempts by adventurers to snatch an advantage in that way.

For a trial of any version, even much modified, of Mr. Hare's system we must turn to Tasmania, the smallest, least ambitious, least political of the seven colonies. Tasmania, however, had in 1896 an able Attorney-General, Mr. Clark, one of the framers of the constitution of the Australian Commonwealth. Thanks to him, the experiment which has puzzled, even repelled, the other colonies has been tried. The trial has been partial and cautious. Small as Tasmania is, the island seemed to her legislators too large a field for the experiment. It was not applied to the whole colony, but to two localities only. There it was successful enough to tempt the Tasmanians to allow it to be employed in their first Federal elections. That seems likely to be the last we shall see of it, at any rate for the present.

According to the Electoral Act of 1896 — the statute containing the law on the subject — the rural constituencies on the island were single-member electorates, where the electors voted for one man, and votes were given and counted in the ordinary way. Preferential voting was confined to the electorates which returned more than one member, and of these districts there were but two — the towns of Hobart and Launceston. Between 1896 and 1901 Hobart was entitled to return six members, and Launceston four. The population of the one place is 34,000, of the other about 19,000. In Hobart, therefore, under the law of 1896, each elector might vote for six members in order of preference. He did so by putting the numerals 1 to 6 opposite the names of the candidates to whom he had least objection. He had to denote in this way not less than three of the names printed on the ballot-paper; otherwise his paper was

invalid. In Launceston he might indicate four names, and must indicate two.[1]

At the elections held under the Hare-Clark system, the returning officer's first duty, after rejecting all spoiled ballot-papers, was to ascertain the quota necessary to return a candidate. In Hobart this was done by dividing the number of effective ballot-papers by six. Supposing the total number to be 3000, any candidate who had 500 first-preference votes—that is to say, had the figure 1 placed after his name 500 times or more—was at once reckoned to be elected.

The further process at an election where preferential voting was used, as at Hobart, was of this nature. Assuming that three candidates have been returned in the first count, solely by first-preference votes, a second count becomes necessary in the case of the others. Fifteen hundred ballot-papers have been used up in returning three men. These are now done with, and are set aside. It is probable, however, that several hundred more first-preference votes will have been recorded for one or other of the successful trio. The first names on these surplus papers are now ignored, and they are

[1] In Appendix A to the Electoral Act, already mentioned, four imaginary ballot-papers are printed—two for a constituency where there are nine candidates for six seats, the other two for one where there are six candidates for four seats. The draftsman, who has used the names of novelists and poets for his candidates, has placed Mr. Gissing in good company, and clearly thinks but poorly of Pope's popularity in Tasmania. Here are the four papers as they might be marked by two electors of different views :—

I.				II.			
Austin .		Austin .	5	Burns .	4	Burns .	4
Dickens .		Dickens .	6	Dryden .		Dryden .	3
Fielding .		Fielding .	4	Milton .	2	Milton .	2
Gissing .	4	Gissing .		Pope .		Pope .	
Lytton .	3	Lytton .		Shakespeare .	1	Shakespeare .	
Meredith .	5	Meredith .		Wordsworth .	3	Wordsworth .	1
Richardson .	6	Richardson .	2				
Scott .	1	Scott .	3				
Thackeray .	2	Thackeray .	1				

counted as votes for the candidates whose names come second on them. In other words, instead of the surplus papers being wasted as in an ordinary election, their second-preference votes are used.

At this stage it is obvious that some precaution must be taken to prevent chance from deciding which of the papers are to be used up in the first count and which are to be treated as surplus and used in the second count. If A's name stands first on 800 papers, it may make all the difference to B which of these are used up in furnishing A's quota and which are retained for the second count. The tendency in one lot may be to a different order of preference to that favoured in the other lot. The Tasmanian returning officer, therefore, had to sort out all A's 800 papers according to their second-preference votes. He noted down the number given to each candidate. A rule of three sum was then worked out—as the number of second-preference votes therein for any candidate is to the whole 800 recorded, so is the number of second-preferences finally allotted to him, to the surplus votes available for distribution. Thus have the Tasmanians endeavoured to overcome the uncertainty which, as Mr. Boyd Kinnear pointed out many years ago, is one of the chief objections to Mr. Hare's original scheme.

In case this distribution of second-preference votes completes the quota of one or more of the remaining candidates, any surplus papers thus set free are treated in the same way as before, except that third-preference votes are used instead of second; and so on until six candidates gain their quotas or there are no surplus votes left to be divided. This last may be the case while one or more seat is yet unfilled. In that case the papers of the candidate with the votes on the list are

taken, the first-preference votes therein ignored, and the second-preference distributed. If this does not end the contest, the ballot-papers of the next lowest are used in the same way, and the process is continued until the sixth man gets his quota.

In the elections held in Hobart and Launceston the machinery of this system appears to have worked smoothly. Beyond increasing the labours of the returning officers and their staffs, and occasionally causing bewilderment to a few voters, it seems to have done no mischief. To prove that it did any marked good is not so easy. The Tasmanian Government statistician, in analysing the voting at the first election at Hobart, found that nearly three-fourths of the first-preference votes were given to the six successful candidates, and only one-fourth to the six who were unsuccessful. There were twelve to choose from. Out of a total of 3046 ballot-papers, 2043 gave first votes to men who were elected, whilst 703 gave them to men who were finally beaten.

In the subjoined table Mr. Johnston gives the distribution of first-preference votes amongst the twelve candidates at the election mentioned, dividing the returned and defeated men into two groups :—

[TABLE.

PERCENTAGE PROPORTION OF FIRST-PREFERENCE VOTES SECURED BY EACH CANDIDATE (FIRST COUNT—CHOICE FREE FOR ALL OF THE TWELVE CANDIDATES, A to L)

Candidates.		First-Preference Votes Secured.	
		No.	Per Cent.
Finally Successful	A . .	501	18·24
	B . .	264	9·61
	C . .	448	16·31
	D . .	393	14·32
	E . .	202	7·36
	F . .	235	8·56
		2,043	74·40
Finally Excluded	G . .	140	5·10
	H . .	143	5·21
	I . .	137	4·99
	J . .	131	4·77
	K . .	118	4·30
	L . .	34	1·23
		703	25·60
All . .		2,746	100

He mentions that the sorting of the papers showed that there was little or no coherence in the defeated group. It was not a case of a small but solid party being squarely beaten by a party larger and equally compact. There was plenty of cross voting, but it was largely in favour of one or other of the successful candidates. In other words, three-fourths of the second- and third-preferences used from the surplus papers of successful members went to other successful members, and four-fifths of the second- and third-preferences used from the papers of the defeated

candidates lowest in order were recorded in favour of the successful candidates.

The question which a student of Mr. Johnston's table is naturally tempted to ask is, whether much the same result could not be secured without the transferable vote. The supporters of the Tasmanian system say frankly that its main advantages are large electoral districts and the wider choice of candidates thus given to the electors. These, of course, could be obtained under a system of single but not transferable votes. To this the Tasmanians reply that the transferable vote is a harmless and effectual precaution against having hundreds of votes wasted in giving a big majority to one or two favourites. Such a mistake might be made, though it was not made at Hobart in this instance, and therefore the correcting influence of the transferable vote was hardly needed.

It is not claimed that these elections at Launceston and Hobart led to the return of abler and better members than before, and it is obvious that an experiment confined to the moderate-sized towns could not have any striking results upon Tasmanian politics generally. Mr. Hare's object in pleading for a national constituency in England was to secure men of first-rate calibre, elected for reasons of national importance. All that the elections referred to proved is that preferential voting is not absurd or impossible, but may be used without confusion in rather small electorates.

Between 1896 and 1901 the following elections at which preferential voting was used were held in Tasmania :—

STATE ELECTIONS

Date.	Electorate.	No. of Seats.	No. of Candidates.
20th Jan. 1897	Hobart	6	12
„ „	Launceston	4	
12th March 1900	Hobart	6	9
„ „	Launceston	4	

COMMONWEALTH ELECTIONS

March 1901	Senate	6	15
„ „	House of Representatives	5	9

The trial given to the system at the election of the Tasmanian contingent of the first Federal Parliament was, of course, on a much wider scale than the urban elections. The constituency was the whole colony, and was therefore Mr. Hare's ideal electorate. At the same time, the small number, both of candidates and of men to be chosen, prevented any great confusion. The total number of ballot-papers for senators was 18,822. Of these only 419 were invalid, and the number rejected from defects due to the preferential system was but 271. Amongst the ballot-papers for representatives the rejections attributed to the system were 335. The choice of senators caused a good deal of surprise; of the six men chosen all but one were new men. On the other hand, only one unexpected success marked the selection of representatives; four of the five returned to the Lower House were well-known local politicians. The most noteworthy feature of the elections was that in no single instance did the successful candidates owe their victory to transferred votes. All would have been returned had none but first-preference votes been counted. They were fairly representative of the colony. If in the Federal Parliament the Tasmasians are not especially distinguished, that is not the fault of

preferential voting. It is not suggested that the candidates they beat were conspicuous statesmen.

In December 1901 a fresh Electoral Act was passed in the Tasmanian Parliament. Localism was dominant, and it was decided that all the constituencies of the Lower House should be single-member electorates.[1] Preferential voting in the State elections, therefore, was abolished. In March 1902 an attempt was made to get the Parliament of the Commonwealth to adopt it. The House of Representatives was said to be favourable to proportional voting, but the Senate would have none of it, and rejected it by two to one. That for the present is the end of the matter.

So far, then, preferential voting has been but a sickly plant on colonial soil. Though attempts have been made to acclimatise it in several colonies, it has grown in one only, and even there it appears just now to be withering away. If we look for the reasons which have told against the adoption of this very taking experiment by colonial politicians—a race usually ready enough to try taking experiments—they are not hard to find. The most marked peculiarity of country constituencies in the colonies is their enormous area: a member often sits for a district large enough to be thought a province in Western Europe. Under even a very much modified version of Mr. Hare's proposal, six or eight candidates would be called upon to contest a territory which might be equal to a small kingdom. To a public man of note, to a rich man, and a man of leisure, the task might not be too difficult or unattractive. The ordinary colonial candidate is not famous,

[1] An attempt was made to insert a clause adopting the contingent vote as in Queensland. This was agreed to in the Lower Chamber, but afterwards struck out.

rich, or leisured, and he shrinks from the prospect of enormous districts. Too dry and complex to interest the average elector, or indeed any but a few students, preferential voting is a reform which can only be carried by the conversion to it of the practical politicians. But the rank and file of the practical politicians are just the men least likely to take it up. Many of them dislike it; many others do not even fancy that they understand it.

In the case of cities and suburbs the objection of unwieldy areas does not apply. There, however, it is admitted that the block votes—Temperance, Publican, Catholic, Orange, Labour—are quite powerful enough already. Most people are unwilling to increase the blind power of their cohesion and organisation by making electorates unmanageably large. They think it better to suffer the "local man," unsatisfactory as he often is.

CHAPTER VI

THE LAND QUESTION[1]

From Quit-Rents to Land Sales

Much of the constructive work to which colonial experimentalists have set their hands during the last twelve years has been detached enough to require very little in the way of historical preface. It has been begun so abruptly that its connection with the past in the colonies—with the past of politics and law-making at any rate—may be sketched in a few paragraphs. Old Age Pensions, State Mortgages, Women's Franchise,

[1] Authorities.—E. Jenks, *The Government of Victoria; The Land Systems of Australasia*, by W. Epps; Dunmore Lang's *Historical and Statistical Account of New South Wales;* Wakefield's *Art of Colonisation; Edward Gibbon Wakefield*, by Richard Garnett; *The South Australian Land Bubble*, Marcus Clarke (included in his Selected Works, Melbourne, 1890); *The Three Colonies of Australia*, by Samuel Sidney; *Our Wasted Heritage*, by D. Ranken (pamphlet), N.S. Wales, 1893; *Bush Essays*, by Capricornus, A. and C. Black, 1872; *South Australia*, by Anthony Forster; *History of Australia*, by G. W. Rusden; *Squatting Orders* (pamphlet), Melbourne, 1854; "Report of Inquiry into the State of the Public Lands," N.S.W., P.P., 1883; *Are We to Stay Here*, by H. J. Sealy (pamphlet), N.Z., 1881; *The Squatting System in Victoria*, by Colin Campbell, Esq. (pamphlet), Melbourne, 1861; "Report of Waste Lands Committee on 'Dummyism,'" N.Z., P.P., 1890; the *New Zealand Mail* of December 1901 gives a history of the Lands Department of New Zealand; "The Land Laws of New Zealand," by Edward Reeves, *Westminster Review*, 1894. For annual summaries of land laws and statistics see Coghlan, Fenton, and N.Z. *Official Year-Book;* also the new Queensland *Official Year-Book* (1901), and J. D. Woods's *Province of South Australia* (official), 1894. Annual Reports and Selectors' Guide-Books are issued by the Lands Departments. The Guides usually contain a digest of the laws in force. As indicated within, most of the land laws have been consolidated since 1888.

Industrial Arbitration, Minimum Wage Laws, are questions which have shot up suddenly in our own time; they did not perplex our fathers, most of whom went to their graves without hearing of them. With the Land Question it is otherwise. That has a history in Australia of more than a hundred years' length, and has been in the foreground of social life and politics in the continent since Governor Phillip issued his first small land grant. From the beginning it has been the vital and living issue in public affairs, the real dividing-line of parties, the key to more struggles, changes, manœuvres, and intrigues than any half-dozen other questions. Between the decay of the convict system towards 1840 and the rise of trade unionism some fifty year later, it was almost the one enduring cause of difference acute enough to make men feel intensely, to make class hate class, the poor distrust the rich, and the rich dread the poor. It was the land question which gave reality and strength to the agitation for self-government headed by Wentworth and Lowe; it was the land question which underlay the colonising schemes of Gibbon Wakefield, and determined the character of South Australia and New Zealand. The concentration of population in the great cities of Australia, the rise of a species of socialism in New Zealand, the easy victory gained by Protection in nearly all the colonies,—these can only be studied and understood in the light of the story of land settlement as affected by the enforcement of laws, the want of laws, and the evasion of laws. Important and interesting as some of the Land Acts of the last decade have been, they are mere continuations of a century of experiment, only the latest of many stages, and no more likely to achieve finality than a score of predecessors. For the student

to grasp their meaning without some knowledge of what went before them, of the intricate system of which they are but parts, is out of the question. Therefore, anxious as I am not to trespass in this book on the ground of the historian, I find it impossible to go further without attempting some sort of sketch, however bald, of the agrarian controversy and the outcome thereof in the seven colonies. The task is no easy matter. The very statutes dealing with land are a depressing array. When the New Zealand land laws were consolidated in 1892, fifty-two Acts and ordinances had to be repealed, and already there are five amending Acts of the main Act then passed. Each statute, too, is the father of many children—a large family of proclamations, orders, rules, regulations, and gazette notices, which troop at its heels and enforce or thwart its intent. And the Land Question still burns in the colonies. Amongst those interested in it there are no moderate men; every one takes a side, thinks quickly, and speaks hotly. The problem of settlement under the perfect tenure is far from being solved. Everywhere the tares which were sown among the wheat are growing still. Nothing—the land included —is fully settled. It used to be urged that the one way to solve land problems was for the State to rid itself of its land. But where this exceedingly doubtful remedy has been tested it has failed to bring peace. The land tax and the compulsory repurchase law assail the holders of the great freeholds. Rates levied on unimproved values are beginning to affect urban landlords. Fair rent bills are at least talked about. As for the immense estates still held by the Crown, the disputes over them are as almost as sharp as ever. The advocates of freehold are still at war with

those of leasehold. The areas to be sold or leased; prices and time of payment; whether purchases are to be conditional or unconditional; the rules as to residence, improvement, and resale; the revaluation of leases,—all these points are still debated and wrangled over as matters of vital concern. Few disputants trouble about the theory or practice of the past or of other communities. They are practical men, they tell you, and judge of matters in the light of their own experience. This usually means that each interprets public needs by the requirements of his own particular district, and is utterly intolerant of any theory—except his own. The strongest and most popular Minister of Lands known to the writer was not at all tolerant, and was so far distrustful of the teachings of the past that he once expressed a wish in Parliament that all books from which people quoted musty precedents might be thrown into a big bonfire. This masculine self-confidence of colonists,—this determination to use their own intelligence in studying public questions, and to trust only to their own understanding and experience,—has its admirable side. It is in refreshing contrast to the timid and dilatory pedantry so abundant in older countries. Yet the drawbacks of provincialism are great; and in the seven colonies it is as curious as it is melancholy to see how slowly one learns from another, and with how close a likeness the most mischievous mistakes have been repeated by neighbour after neighbour. In no branch of State work, perhaps, has success been so chequered with failure as in the management of the estate which England fifty years ago handed over—a princely endowment—to the young colonies then about to try their hands at self-government. To say that this noble possession has been wasted would be to exaggerate. Much has been put to

excellent use; much is still in hand. But the waste has been prodigal, and the errors, perhaps, irreparable. For generations the colonies are likely to suffer from them. Yet, whilst sorrowfully admitting this, a democrat can find two consolations. Much of the worst mischief was done before the grant of complete self-government. Nearly all the rest was the fruit of mistakes made in the earlier years of parliamentary life. Most of the colonies learned wisdom from hard experience, and for the last quarter of a century have at least tried to safeguard their heritage from the "land shark" and the speculator.

Australia and New Zealand contain, roughly, 3,000,000 square miles. After a liberal allowance for hopeless deserts, baffling scrubs, mountain-tops, and dubious tropical tracts is deducted, there remain at least a million square miles of healthy, useful territory, some of it beautiful, much of it fertile, and portions of it endowed with mineral wealth. In this good country, five times as large as France, there are considerably less than five million people. When it is remembered that a million and a half of these live in cities of 50,000 inhabitants and upwards, and that many of the "rural" people are miners, it seems well-nigh incredible that any colonist able to use land should lack it. Europeans can hardly view without a smile the spectacle of so small a handful quarrelling over so vast an inheritance. Yet, not only are there bickerings to-day when colonists number millions; there were outcries even louder and feuds even bitterer when the whole continent held fewer Whites than little Tasmania can show to-day. So troublesome is it to manage a national estate.

For more than sixty years after the coming of Governor Phillip, the lands of Australia were in the

hands of despotic officials. For about half this time the despotism was absolute; during the second half it was tempered by a Legislative Council, which, from being official and timidly subservient, steadily grew more and more free-spoken, obstructive, and popular. Up to 1831, land was chiefly disposed of by grants, either free or subject to a low quit-rent. Usually these quit-rents were supposed to equal 5 per cent of the value of the granted land, but seem never to have been higher than twopence an acre on country lands, and often lower than a farthing an acre. Sometimes the land was granted rent free for a time, with a stipulation that a quit-rent should be paid after a few years. Residence and improvement were almost always insisted upon, and a common practice was to oblige the settler to feed, clothe, and employ a certain number of convict labourers. This service was often accepted in lieu of rent, and, if rendered for a term of years, entitled the settler to hold his grant rent free for ever.[1] For every convict thus fed, clothed, lodged, and watched the landowner was credited with £16 a year. In many grants a condition was inserted that the quit-rent might be extinguished at any time within five-and-twenty years by a payment of twenty times its yearly value. Two excellent features of the system were the small size of most of the blocks of land granted, and the practice of surveying them before giving possession. Governor Phillip's early grants were of 30 and 40 acres. His first thirty-four grantees did not on the average hold

[1] "My father arrived in the colony as a free settler in the month of January 1824, having an order for a grant of land from Earl Bathurst. On presenting the order at the Colonial Secretary's Office, he merely pledged himself to employ twenty convict servants, and accordingly obtained a grant of 2000 acres; but in the year 1823 my younger brother, who had had no order from the Home Government, but merely offered to maintain ten servants, on applying for a grant of land, obtained a grant of 1000 acres."—J. D. Lang.

more than 50 acres each. A generation later the blocks might vary from half a square mile to four square miles—still very moderate areas in Australian eyes. Stockowners were allowed to run sheep and cattle on unoccupied Crown lands, and efforts were made to reserve large commons for their use on the old English plan. Primitive as the arrangements seem, narrow as the scale looks when compared with later expansion, there was much that was sound in the quit-rent grants. The settlement that went on in the nineteen counties—as the older district round Sydney was called—was for the most part genuine. It did not mean merely that sheep and cattle multiplied in a silent wilderness. Homes were made, family life could be seen, children were not called "encumbrances"; there was a population living roughly, but in comfort. A generation after its abandonment, thoughtful writers not ignorant of their subject could be found to take up the cudgels for the vanished quit-rent system, and regret its disappearance. For disappear it did, to make room for cash sales, huge pastoral leases, free selection before survey, and the long warfare between squatter and selector. Why did a system which had such genuine merits, which bears so odd a likeness to certain brand-new democratic land tenures, and which was in use for more than forty years, perish utterly? There was more than one contributing cause. In the first place, its administration was always in the hands of despotic officials, and in such hands the ten commandments would have come to be regarded as immoral and detestable. Then the administration, apart from the administrators, showed serious faults. The grants varied so in size and in the rent reserved that it was easy to suspect favouritism and corruption. Whilst

2560 acres was the utmost limit an ordinary grantee could reach, special grants were made far exceeding this. Great areas were handed over to the Australian Agricultural Company and the Van Diemen's Land Company. Favoured persons were given areas not so large, but still large enough to cause envy and murmuring. No one could fairly say that the 5000 acres made over to Captain M'Arthur, the founder of Australian sheep-farming, was too much; but other and larger gifts had not so good an excuse. Light as the quit-rents were, they were allowed to fall into arrear. During Governor Macquarie's reign, for instance, none were collected. Early in the forties it was found that, while they ought to be yielding a revenue of £10,000 a year, the arrears had mounted up to £55,000. The quit-renters agitated for remissions, and though some of their demands were coolly unreasonable, the Government gave way. Most of the arrears were forgiven, back payments of rent were turned into instalments of purchase-money; generally the quit-renters were allowed to turn their holdings into freehold on the easiest of terms. Even had the quit-rents been punctually exacted they would not in the thirties have furnished any large revenue. That was the practical difficulty which had to be faced when William IV. came to the the throne and new ideas were afloat. By 1831 some 4,000,000 acres had passed from the Crown, and very little money had been taken in return. As long as Australia was looked on as an Imperial prison, the Home Government had to finance it after a fashion. Downing Street might grumble, and did, over the outlay on the showy public works of an energetic governor like Macquarie. Still, the bill was paid, and, thanks to English doles and convict labour, a colony with a customs revenue of less

than £50,000 a year was provided with roads, bridges, and public buildings. Before 1830, however, most men with any foresight saw that a change was inevitable. The free settlers had asserted themselves. The day had gone by when a Governor could blurt out that only two classes had any business in New South Wales—those who had been convicted and those who ought to have been. The continent was not to be a reserve for convicts and freed men. The stream of free settlers was submerging prisoners and ex-prisoners together. The Legislative Council was growing less pliable, and intelligent minds were looking ahead towards the goal of self-government, and to the hour when transportation should cease. It was clear enough that, if these good things were to be got, revenue would have to be found. The first requisite was a strong and steady stream of free immigrants; the second was money for public works, to be constructed by free, and therefore paid, labour. An almost unpopulated country cannot yield taxes in the ordinary way. There was, however, in Australia one source which might be tapped—the sale of land. As early as 1823 the Home Government had sent out regulations under which land was to be put up to auction, but Governor Sir Thomas Brisbane declined to enforce them.

At this stage we encounter Gibbon Wakefield. As biography is, perhaps, a trespasser in this volume, I will not stop to give any personal sketch of the remarkable propagandist whose theories had more to do with moulding Australian and New Zealand land laws than had any other single man's. Moreover, his life has at last been written, and by Dr. Garnett. Yet I doubt whether Wakefield has, even yet, had justice done to his service to the Empire. His share in bringing transportation to

an end and in securing self-government for the White colonies is hardly recognised. The credit of the part he played in Canada is commonly given to Lord Durham, though we have the testimony of John Stuart Mill that the memorable Durham Report (written by Charles Buller) was, in part at least, inspired by Wakefield. Few outside New Zealand remember that, but for him, that colony would now be a French possession. Yet these not unimportant achievements were, after all, but episodes of a strenuous life. More than any one he contributed to revive the spirit which has led for sixty years to the peaceful expansion of England. He found colonisation a byword and left it a branch of statesmanship. His influence began in 1829 with the appearance of his tract, *A Letter from Sydney*. In 1829 the spirit of British colonisation, if not dead, was sleeping. This was not because competition and anxiety in the middle classes or unemployment amongst work-people were unknown. These were just as troublesome and just as much discussed as in later years. In 1834, George Grote, the historian, said tersely that, though no country was so well able as England to found prosperous colonies, no country needed such colonies so much. Up to 1835, what emigration there was went chiefly to the United States. To Canada, indeed, certain shiploads of pauper emigrants were from time to time sent. So unwholesome were the conditions under which these poor people made the Atlantic voyage, so rife was infectious disease amongst them by the time they reached Montreal or Quebec, that the Canadians dreaded their arrival. Canada itself was unhappy and disaffected; Australia was only ceasing to be merely a costly convict station. New Zealand was a group of Cannibal Islands notorious for the bloody feuds of its tribes. In South

Africa we had a colony peopled by rough Dutch farmers, whose appreciation of our rule may be judged from their efforts to escape it by trekking to the interior. The day of self-government for British colonies was yet many years off, and a study of their condition may well cause the least reckless student to say that government from distant Downing Street was bad for both dependencies and Mother Country.

With things in this state, Gibbon Wakefield came forward, a theorist and an organiser. Plausible and persuasive, he yet might have failed but for a persistency which lead him to urge his peculiar views for nearly thirty years, with no pause, except in one or two intervals of exhaustion and ill-health. Without pretending that he was the first to discover the true value of self-governing colonies, it is fair to suggest that he was the first to open men's eyes to the immense value of the waste lands of the Empire, and to show that these sites for colonies were lying ready to be turned to account in raising capital for the work of colonising. Then, too, he had grasped the truth that colonising was, as he called it, an art—as others would say, a business. He urged that it should be organised, and not left to be the haphazard migration of units or families. Why were colonies languishing, emigration unpopular, and colonists looked down upon as inferior persons? The better sort of English and Scotch did not emigrate. Emigration was regarded as a recourse of the wretched; colonies as places of exile—refuges for paupers and social failures. To Gibbon Wakefield it seemed clear that England's waste territories were worthy of a better use. He set himself to prove that they need not be dismal places of banishment, but might be made scenes of civilised and comfortable life.

He pointed to the Greek colonies of old. These, as he pictured them, were communities from the outset. Small but complete, filled with public spirit, they went forth from the mother city to found at once an organised urban State with a developed social life. The problem was how to bring about amongst Britons migration of this kind. To organise such an exodus in the nineteenth century money is needed. Money seventy years ago was hard to get for colonising. It was notorious that capitalists hardly ever emigrated. The reason—so it seemed to Wakefield—was because they could not depend in the colonies upon a constant supply of labour for any wage that they could profitably pay. Yet, if States were to be quickly built up in the desert, labour and capital must be sent across the ocean together. Capital must be tempted to go, and labour conveyed free of cost.

Whence were funds to come to provide for this migration, and for the first expenses of government in the new lands? Next, how to ensure that labour after arriving should be content for a while to remain labour, and to toil for wages, even the best wages? It was believed in Wakefield's day that no labourers would be content to go on working for wages while land was lying to be picked up for nothing. When he began his advocacy of systematic settlement he had the experience of British America, South Africa, and Australia to go upon. In all three colonies, Wakefield declared, and with partial truth, the spectacle to be seen was a general rush for land by settlers of all kinds and capacities. The land was seldom sold; scarcely the most trifling payment was demanded for it. It was regarded as a drug to be given away. Given away it was, amid a carnival of jobbery and favouritism. In Upper Canada great

estates were thus created, which proved a permanent barrier to settlement. A million acres was given to one company in New South Wales for eighteenpence an acre. The most glaring example of the mischief caused by indiscriminate and enormous land grants was to be found in Western Australia, or, as in those days it was called, Swan River. Though most of the western half of Australia is a dry desert, there is a province in the south-west corner with a fair rainfall and a not infertile soil. An attempt was made to settle this in 1825. The English Government allowed a handful of pioneers to divide amongst themselves the whole of the best of the country. In a few years, by means of gigantic land grants, something like 3,000,000 acres had been parcelled out amongst 2000 people. The land was almost thrown away; little was asked and less was got for it. As the outcome, there was no human society, no place for population, no demand for labour, no hope of progress. Men fled from such a "settlement," and for sixty years scarcely anything in the way of advance was to be seen in Western Australia.

Wakefield's land system, summed up, was the recognition of the value of waste soil, and a proposal to limit the supply in the land-market by fixing a uniform and sufficient price. In the case of fresh settlements the process of scientific colonising was to be worked out as follows. First an English Company was to be formed, in which was to be vested the land of the proposed colony. Then persons willing to emigrate were to be selected and banded together in the Mother Country under some form of organisation containing the elements of a potential society. To all able to buy were to be sold pieces of the desert but fertile country. A uniform price was to be fixed upon its available land, and the

money received for sales at this price was to be used, first in conveying the community to its new home, next in defraying the cost of taking thither a supply of labour. As years went on, and more land was sold, the money not required to keep up the stream of labour was to be spent in opening up the public estate by surveys, roads, and bridges. Capitalists were expected to buy the dear land in the Wakefield colonies, because there only would capitalists be able to count upon labour. Labour was to be attracted by free passages across the sea in comfortable ships, and by the prospect of employment at good wages. The settlements would be concentrated, because the holdings would be smaller than in the colonies where land was given away. This concentration would give the colonists the advantage of neighbourhood and human society. Further, it was part of the vision that the leaders, at least, of each new community should be men of education, and, if possible, of good family and social position. Since the price put on public lands was to be uniform, and land—good, bad, and indifferent—was to be priced at the same figure, much even of rich, and nearly all inferior land would long remain unsold. This might be occupied by pastoral tenants on the easiest possible terms. But the country grazed over by the sheep and cattle of these tenants was always to remain open for free selection and cash purchase.

In examining the working of his system and the Australian modifications of it, we have to bear in mind that most of the land bought by settlers at his sufficient price was bought under the feet of pastoral tenants. The influence of land-purchase upon the squatters, and their influence upon it, form a great part of the history of land laws and settlement in the seven colonies.

These are in outline the main points of Wakefield's theory of what he called the Art of Colonisation :—

1. That colonisation should be systematic.
2. That settlement should be concentrated.
3. That the price of land should be fixed, uniform, and "sufficient."
4. That land revenue should be spent on immigration and public works.
5. That pastoral leases should be short, and pastoral lands open to free selection.

It is not, perhaps, surprising that a quick and imaginative mind should have dreamt some such dream as a colony built up in this way. What is surprising is the great and long-continued influence which the theory had. As a result of it, two of the finest of the British colonies were founded, and the land laws of almost every other colony were modified and their history profoundly influenced. Great as were the blunders made in founding the Wakefield settlements, severe as were the sufferings and disappointments endured by the colonists therein, they cannot be called failures. For South Australia and New Zealand were in the end brilliant successes. It may be said that in both these countries Wakefield's land system was more and more departed from, and that the systems of to-day in New Zealand and Australia are very different from his. The answer is that Wakefield's sufficient price for land was conceived as a means of founding colonies and carrying them through their early stages. It was not to be an eternal institution, or a law of the Medes and Persians. In his own lifetime he modified his views as the years brought lessons. His system was the means to a certain end. That end, the building up of high-class colonies, it attained or helped to attain.

Now let us see how the theory worked in practice. About the first of the five points there can be no dispute. In so far as Wakefield's system embraced the careful selection of emigrants morally and physically worthy, and in so far as it meant the discrediting of the bad old system of regarding colonies as receptacles for criminals and hopeless paupers, its soundness seems now so self-evident that we stand amazed to think that it should ever have had to be painfully demonstrated. We do not now imagine that England's daughter-states are to be built up on social rubbish. That this monstrous view has been repudiated is due, in part at least, to Gibbon Wakefield. The good effects of this part of his doctrine are to be seen to-day in many colonies, but of course the most direct evidence is found in South Australia and in those parts of New Zealand founded by his associations. There the high character of the settlers, the rarity of crime, the good standard of education, the evidences of intelligence, and even of refinement, have always been obvious enough to strike even very hasty observers. But when the Wakefield companies passed from the selection of colonists to planting them on the soil, they sometimes blundered horribly. And it is with mixed feelings, at the best, that we trace the working out of his third principle (the doctrine of the sufficient price), and of that part of the fifth which related to free selection before survey.

The revolution in policy, for good and evil, brought about by Wakefield's crusade against convicts and free grants of land, began as early as the year 1831. When it is remembered that in the seven colonies something like 135,000,000 acres of land have been alienated, and 800,000,000 acres leased, since he began his attack, the financial importance of the blow

he dealt is obvious enough. The scores of millions which land sales and leases have brought into colonial treasuries have been in the main well laid out in the work of colonisation. That the severest critic of land sales will, I think, admit.

Colony-making

The Wakefield system—as we shall see presently—was never tried in complete form in Eastern Australia. A high price was put on land, and the proceeds were spent on immigration and public works; but the price was an upset, a minimum not a maximum. In other crucial points the plan followed was not Wakefield's; least of all would he have liked the granting of long leases to squatters. In another part of the continent, however, his system played a remarkable part in a theatre to which we will now turn. South Australia, the first attempt at something like a complete Wakefield colony, was founded in 1836. In soil, climate, and in freedom from dangerous beasts and any strong savage tribes, it was a very favourable theatre for experiment. The settlers were carefully chosen, and were taken out without serious suffering or mischance. Some thousands of people were safely landed where the city of Adelaide now stands. But, first of all, the mistake had been make of selling them their land and taking their money for it in advance. The land had not been surveyed, and so was not ready for occupation. The settlers were out of pocket, and unable to begin to get any return on their outlay or make the soil productive. They hung about the site of their embryo city, waiting for their farms to be surveyed, growing no food, and eating bread made of flour imported at a cost of £80 to

£100 a ton. Though the farms were not laid out, the city was, and a block in it was given to each original settler on payment of £1. After the first allotment, sections were put up to auction, and brought more than six times the upset price. The settlers were full of confidence and enthusiasm. Convinced that their colony would succeed, they thought that every holder of farm or city land was a potential man of fortune. Clustering about the town in more or less enforced idleness, they soon caught land fever, and began buying and selling town sections at ridiculous prices. The fever was short, but it was very sharp. It had its humorous side, but, though a comedy while it lasted, it ended in a very melancholy little tragedy. Pioneer leaders, who had been regarding the new life as a picnic, and giving dinners and luncheons at which guests made merry on champagne and potted meats, found themselves, within two years, in want of the commonest necessities of life. In place of exchanging hospitalities and founding a refined society, they, and many of their friends, became objects of the pity and contempt of those who had been their labourers and servants. Governor Gawler intensified the fever, and therefore increased the misery and distress which followed the bursting of the little boom, by employing the people on public works, foremost amongst which was a Governor's house costing £20,000. But as he borrowed money for these by drawing on the English Treasury, and the English Treasury dishonoured his bills, his policy ended in his sudden recall. For a time the beggared pioneers were in despair. Presently Sir George Grey, who took the helm from Gawler, after some severe exercise of the virtues of retrenchment and common-sense, managed to extract help in money from the Imperial Government. Land was cultivated, copper

mines were discovered, and South Australia ceased to be miserable.

The Adelaide land boom and its collapse gave glaring evidence of one of the worst flaws in the Wakefield land system. The difficulty of fixing a uniform price for land low enough not to prevent *bona-fide* purchase in normal times, and at the same time high enough to check speculation in moments of excitement, would, one might think, have struck Wakefield and his friends at the outset. But though, later in life, he seems to have recognised that a sort of sliding scale of prices might be needed, none was provided for at the founding of his settlements. Further, no provision had been made against blocks of land becoming mere counters in the games of gambling speculators. Buyers were allowed to resell without check. Yet it is obvious that the purpose of selling land to people in a young settlement is that they may use it. It is equally obvious that the price paid to the State by the purchaser of land ought to represent, as far as possible, only the amount of capital extracted from the pocket of the man who is going to use the land. The rest he ought to keep to enable him to work the soil to the best advantage. Directly feverish trafficking in land excites a colony, the working settler—the man who does go on to the land and use it—often pays a great deal more for his farm than the price received by the State. He pays the excess to some middleman, who pockets the difference. That is to say, the sufficient price aimed at by Wakefield has ceased to be a sufficient price.

Subsequent land laws of South Australia show a string of devices to meet this evil. In 1843 the Imperial Land Sales Act of the year before came into force, and the price of £1 an acre, instead of being fixed, became a

minimum. All land was sold by auction at that upset, and up to 1869 sales by auction were trusted to. Experience, however, showed that the "land shark" would often outbid the genuine settler at auction, and either keep the best land or resell it to farmers at the highest profit he could squeeze out of them. To check this reformers invented what was technically called selection under settlement conditions. Instead of public land being sold right out for cash to any chance purchaser, a limited block of it might be selected by a would-be settler at a fixed price to be paid in instalments. The selector was not to obtain his fee-simple until he had resided a certain number of years upon his land, or until he had laid out a certain amount of money or labour in improving the land, or until he had both improved the land and made his home on it. Successive laws made these conditions more and more stringent, but in return usually made the terms of payment easier. Between 1869 and 1888 many law-makers endeavoured to frame such settlement conditions as would ensure genuine occupation for use. Against them was brought to bear much clever trickery and much patient evasion.

Very early in her history South Australia passed a law relating to land for which the other six colonies still owe her a debt of gratitude. The Torrens Land Transfer Act, placed on the statute-book in 1858, sprang from the brain of an intelligent Collector of Customs at Adelaide, who, having seen in early life something of the ways of the English Court of Chancery, had come to hold very strong views about exorbitant legal charges. He thought out a plan by which a system of registered proprietorship should cheapen and simplify future dealings with land. This he submitted to the most eminent local legal authorities, and they threw cold water upon it.

Not disheartened, Torrens found less learned advisers who thought better of it. An agitation in its favour was begun, and after a short contest with the legal profession, the laymen won the day. After watching it at work in South Australia, colony after colony adopted the Torrens law with but little change. Now forty years have passed, and the colonial system of land transfer is still in substance the plan hit upon by the ingenious Customs officer. Everywhere it works smoothly and usefully. Lands registry offices are open in every large district. Any proprietor may apply to register his land in one of these. After proper investigation by the public examiner of titles, his title and the description of his land are inscribed in one of the office ledgers. From that moment he is a registered proprietor, and any innocent purchaser from him has an indefeasible title. Thereafter any person dealing with the land has merely to send an agent to the registry office. A memorandum of the transaction—sale, lease, or mortgage —is inscribed on the page of the office ledger devoted to the particular property. A duplicate of the memorandum is handed to the agent, who may or may not be a solicitor, and the business is completed in an hour for a tithe of the cost to a conveyancer's client under the old system. The transfer system's importance is due, in great measure, to its being in part compulsory. All land acquired from the State, after the coming into force of the Transfer Acts, is placed under them as a matter of course. The registration of other private lands is optional, and though the older system is being gradually extinguished, it dies hard.

While the fate of South Australia was still in the balance, Wakefield was busy colonising New Zealand.

The story of his New Zealand Land Company shows another succession of mistakes, temporary suffering, and ultimate success. Again the cardinal error was committed in London of selling unsurveyed land to intending settlers, and of sending them out in hundreds and thousands before it was known whether they could be put on their land. In the earlier settlements some of the unfortunate colonists were kept waiting for their farms for years. Downing Street ignorance, official jealousy, and peculiar difficulties connected with buying land from the natives were contributing causes of wretchedness. The settlers were herded up in plots on the sea-coast, living on their capital and often in great straits. The labourers sent out to work for these farmers could get no employment. Once more, as in Australia, curses both deep and loud went up against Wakefield, his Company, and his system. Yet even these earlier New Zealand settlements were in the end successful. In the two later settlements fathered by Wakefield's Company most of these mistakes were avoided. The student who wishes to know how the Wakefield theory could work, when something like common-sense was brought to bear in administering it, should turn to the records of the provinces of Canterbury and Otago in the South Island. In Canterbury it was that the Wakefield system had its fullest and most favourable trial. A high price was fixed on the land there, and was steadfastly adhered to for no less than forty years. At first, indeed, the price was as high as £3 an acre, £1 of which was to be set apart as a church and educational endowment, for Canterbury was a Church of England settlement. But after a short time this special £1 for the clerical endowment was done away with, the price fixed at £2 an acre, and at that it

remained. For some years, portions of the district were subject to the cheap land regulations of Sir George Grey, under which so many blocks of land in New Zealand were sold to large proprietors at 5s. and 10s. an acre. In those parts, therefore, are found certain large pastoral freehold properties. Where the uniform high price was always charged scarcely any such estates were built up. This is the best vindication of Wakefield's foresight. It shows that where the price charged was high enough to be indeed a sufficient price, it would do much to prevent monopoly, and even check speculation. For at least twenty years in Canterbury genuine settlement went on under the Wakefield price; there and in Otago the land revenue furnished millions which were well spent on opening up the country; and to-day the tracts thus settled form one of the best-farmed districts in the colonies. After twenty years, indeed, the system broke down in Canterbury. In the seventies, railway lines were suddenly pushed through the province; there was an inrush of population; and the 40s. an acre was no longer a sufficient price. The people very foolishly neither raised this price nor imposed settlement conditions upon purchases. A fever as hot as that in Adelaide in 1837 raged in Canterbury between 1872 and 1878. During it the whole of the agricultural land in that part of New Zealand passed away from the State; and the ruinous collapse which followed may be regarded as the end of the completest trial of selling land at a high uniform price without settlement conditions. The history of the experiment began with a land fever in Adelaide and ended with a land fever in Canterbury.

The Company which founded the colony of New Zealand in 1840 fixed the price of the first land sold to its emigrants at £1 an acre, and the Imperial law

of 1842 confirmed the practice. Though this law did not have force in New Zealand after 1846, 20s. continued to be the usual price, until in 1853, after the Company and its traditions had passed away, Governor Grey lowered the price of rural lands to 10s., and even to 5s. an acre. In 1858 a general law was passed enacting that rural lands should be sold at auction in blocks of not more than half a square mile, at an upset price of not less than 5s. The provinces into which the colony was then divided administered the lands and spent the land revenue each after its own fashion until the year 1876. In practice the upset prices fixed in the various provinces ranged from 5s. in Auckland to as high as £1 in Otago, where efforts were made, not without success, to enforce settlement conditions. As early as 1861 the purchaser of a block of waste land in Otago had to make improvements thereon in two years equal in value to twice the purchase-money. Alone, Canterbury adhered to its principle of free selection at £2 an acre without restriction as to quantity bought or settlement conditions. So, up to the end of the seventies, New Zealand afforded not one but several object lessons. The land sold in Canterbury and Otago brought in on the average six times as much as that put in the market in Auckland. The southern provinces had millions to spend, while insolvency looked the northeners in the face. Here, great estates were being accumulated by purchase at low prices; there, men were painfully saving their earnings to buy small farms at high prices. In certain places and times in the North Island large properties were acquired by bargains made with the Maori. One great natural check to land monopoly was found in the dense forest, which clothed some 30,000,000 acres in the

islands. Sheep could not live in it; so, in the hunt for pastoral lands it was let alone, to be preserved for the small settler and dairy farmer in after days. After 1878, the growth of new opinions, and the appearance on the scene of the Radical party under Grey, Stout, and Ballance, put a check on rapid accumulation. Yet, in 1891, it was found that 7,000,000 acres of freehold, and three-and-a-half million acres of leasehold, including much of the best land of the colony, were held by 584 owners, none of whom possessed less than 5000 acres. This, be it noted, was exclusive of the great pastoral leases, the fee-simple of which has been retained by the State. Nearly the whole of this aggregation of land in few hands had been effected prior to the year 1878. Without question it was the result of selling land too cheaply, and without limiting the area a man could buy, or seeing to the use he made of his purchase.

Gibbon Wakefield died in New Zealand in 1862. Before, therefore, going on to the experiment of free selection at an insufficient price, the long trial of which was begun in New South Wales in 1861, a few closing words may be in place here on the theory of free selection at a sufficient price. None of the colonies now aim at simplicity in land legislation. The waste of a fourth of their estate has taught them the necessity of complicated laws, elaborate machinery, and vigilant—nay, high-handed control. Yet, though none of the systems now in force bear much resemblance to the famous theory propounded in Wakefield's *Art of Colonisation*, no sketch of the Land Question would be true which does not show how profoundly his teaching influenced the laws of the colonies.

I am well aware that Wakefield's is no name to conjure with among Australian democrats. He is

vaguely remembered at the other end of the world as a man who schemed to reproduce there the landlord and the serf, the squire and the State church.[1] His "sufficient price" is believed to have been meant as a perpetual barrier between labour and the land. When it is remembered that this sufficient price was never more than £3 an acre, and was sometimes as low as 12s.,—when it is remembered that Wakefield distinctly states in his *Art of Colonisation* that should the supply of labour ever be found in excess, land ought at once to be cheapened,—the injustice of this myth may be seen. What Wakefield did boldly argue was that it is a mistake to tempt *all* the labour of a new-born community on to the land by dangling before the eyes of every labourer free grants of land. But it was his vehement wish that the better sort of labourers should be able, thanks to constant employment and good wages, to start with capital after a few years as thriving small farmers. He was quite shrewd enough to know that such men would have an infinitely better chance than would ignorant emigrants just landed and put to cultivate the soil without either experience or capital.

[1] To name the attacks on the Wakefield system would be to write a long list. Samuel Sydney and Ranken are amongst his fiercest assailants, and as a specimen of the extreme anti-Wakefield view, the following amusing passage from *Our Wasted Heritage* is perhaps worth quoting:—

> During the first part of this century a mania arose in London for colony-making. Idle old gentlemen, who had never been beyond the narrow seas, used to meet and cackle about "our great colonial empire," and they called meetings and opened the purse-strings of enthusiasm and credulity in order to start people to inhabit this same empire. Hack writers, paid spouters, and touts of all kinds gathered round them. Open-mouthed wonder-mongers gandered about, telling what they had heard. The amiable parents of large families opened their eyes when they were told that countries were waiting for them where beef was 2d. per pound. Pamphlets printed in the Strand, about Australia and other colonies, written by people who had never been beyond Greenwich, were scattered broadcast. . . . The most successful advocate of this tomfoolery was a Mr. Gibbon Wakefield. His scheme was based upon the idea that if people, in occupying new countries, were jammed together as close as they were in England, and if land were sold only at a high price, then a *facsimile* of the Mother Country would spring up at the antipodes.

On the other hand, Anthony Forster, *South Australia*, defends Wakefield.

Many thousands of the best farmers in colonies where the Wakefield system has been more or less in force have started in life as farm-labourers, and have gained their knowledge and their capital in that way. The stern story of colonial life has taught us all how slender are the chances of the working settler who has not these two possessions — experience and some little capital.

Instead of condemning Wakefield as a charlatan, it is fairer to say that, as a temporary expedient, his free selection at a sufficient price had merits. It raised revenue for public works and immigration which could not have been raised by taxes; and when resolutely enough applied, it checked monopoly. Failing a far-sighted policy of perpetual leasing, or of restricted sale under effectual settlement conditions, it was not a bad method in its time. It did much mischief in the hands of incompetent administrators in the first years of South Australia. When tried half-heartedly as in New South Wales, or persisted in too long as in South New Zealand, it failed. When, in fine, after 1870, the colonies began to borrow the money for immigration and public works, the main excuse for selling land for cash ceased, and the wholesale sacrifice of the public estate ought thereupon to have been abandoned.

The Squatters

A Letter from Sydney appeared in 1829. Adelaide was not founded until 1836; Wellington not until 1840. Meanwhile Wakefield was incessantly busy, and his teaching began to bear fruit of a kind. In 1831 Lord Ripon sent out a mandate from Downing Street to Sydney, superseding free grants throughout Eastern

Australia by auction sales at an upset price of 5s. an acre.[1] The blocks put up for sale were to be, on the average, one square mile (640 acres) in size —an area which reappears again and again in colonial land laws between 1830 and 1900. Sale by auction was not what Wakefield wanted. He desired his "sufficient" price to be fixed, uniform, and much higher than 5s. an acre. Still, to him and his friends it was something that land was to be given away no longer. Lord Ripon also permitted yearly grazing-leases of blocks of one square mile. These were put up to auction at an upset price of £1 a block. The Government, however, could sell the fee-simple over the lessee's head, and could turn him out at a month's notice. Here we have the beginning of pastoral licenses. The first result of the new land regulations was good. They at once provided a land revenue which, from 1831 to 1839, yielded on the average £60,000 a year. In the first five years it rose from £14,000 to £133,000. The spending of this money on bringing in free immigrants, and on public works, helped the colony to expand rapidly, improved it socially, and hastened the downfall of the convict system. With the good results, however, bad soon mingled. The local officials who administered Lord Ripon's regulations did not trouble themselves to limit the number of purchases which any one buyer might make, or to insist that buyers should live on their land and improve it. Speculators, therefore, went in and bought blocks of land right and left, picking up choice pieces, here at the upset price, there at some fancy value. Much land was bought for genuine settlement, much more to pass from hand to hand and to be bought and sold for paper. Over half-a-million acres of

[1] The 5s. minimum was extended to Western Australia in 1832.

public land were purchased in 1840, though the upset price had been raised in 1838 to 12s. an acre. Dealings in private land, in pastoral licenses, and in live stock, went on at inflated prices. The expenditure of the land revenue on opening up the country and on bringing out immigrants, wise in itself, yet made the fever hotter. Fortunes and reputations bubbled suddenly up on the surface of society, to burst as quickly. There had been something of the kind already in 1827; but the second attack of fever was sharper, and lasted longer than the first. The early land booms in Eastern Australia were very like those of later days; the stage was smaller, but the folly of the performers just as great. Yet, when we try to recall their position, it is easy to see how they lost their heads. In the thirties pastoral Australia had just been unveiled by the explorers. In the sixteen years elapsing between the finding of the Pandora Pass through the Liverpool ranges in 1823 and Macmillan's expedition to Gippsland, there came a rush of such discoveries as might fire the dullest imagination. Oxley hit upon the Brisbane River and the semi-tropical district where the capital of Queensland now stands. Hume crossed Victoria from the Murray to Port Phillip. Sturt made his famous boat voyage down the Murrumbidgee and the Murray to the sea. Mitchell saw and described rich territories as far apart as the Barcoo and Western Victoria. Sixty subsequent years of painful searching and journeying have not revealed half as much good country as that of which returning explorers could tell the Sydney folks in those sixteen years. How much more lay beyond no man then knew; the far interior might be Arcadia, or might hold a sea or a sand-waste. Enough pasture had been found to carry sheep and

cattle in myriads, and to dazzle young and old in the nineteen counties. And all this wilderness, with its possibilities, known and unknown, lay spread out before the feet of a handful of people numbering about 50,000 in 1831, and perhaps three times that number in 1844.

All the while, the strange law begotten of the convict system—the law which made the nineteen counties a prison, and which forbade the inhabitants of the Old Settled Districts to pass beyond their limits—was still in force. As successive discoveries brought back tales of one new Arcadia after another, the more adventurous spirits would not be cooped up any longer. Singly, or in small parties, they broke bounds, and an illegal stream of pastoral adventurers noiselessly flowed out north, west, and south, occupying the interior of New South Wales, crossing from Tasmania into Victoria, and finally taking up the Darling Downs and the country round Moreton Bay.

By 1839 these pioneers, with their shepherds and servants, numbered several thousands, and there was reckoned to be as much live stock outside the old settlements as in them.[1] So came about the exodus of the

[1] "The fruits of these pioneers' labours were soon seen in the trains of wool teams that found their way to the seaports, and in droves of fat bullocks sent for sale. The pioneers in person showed in the settlements at times, vigorous, loud, and confident, and the eyes of the colonists were directed to the rich western country where lay the secret cause of these. 'Was there any more good country?' 'Nothing beyond me; all desert; hot, scorching winds.' 'Would it not be well to open the country to regular settlement?' 'Never do; nothing will grow westward; no water; fearful heat; no population could live; loss of stock at times fearful.' This was the common report brought in, but those who could see through it, and persisted in going out, never failed to find country they could live in and grass for their stock.

"These pioneers were the squatters. . . . With their adopted name they had established a caste and agreed upon a creed. It was to the effect that the inland pastures belonged to their body and that they would keep them. . . . To those new-comers who bought stock and runs, civility was shown, but to those who came with stock to look for grass a black account was always given. If a man

squatters, as notable and interesting an episode in Australian history as the gold discoveries of a later decade, though history-writers and story-tellers have never paid the first squatters a tithe of the attention given to the early gold-seekers. Since it was in defiance of law and authority that these pioneers rode out into the desert and grazed their flocks and herds on the new-found pastures, their exodus has features in common with the Great Trek of the Dutchmen in South Africa. Happily they were too widely scattered, too quickly followed up by authority, and too liberally treated, to have either the wish or the opportunity to found independent communities. So sparse was pastoral settlement, then and long afterwards, that the problem of local government is not solved in Australia even yet. The squatters lived too far apart to be likely to combine against authority. Nor did authority try to drive them to desperation. After 1831 it acquiesced in the exodus; and was satisfied at first to demand a license-fee of £10 for each "run" squatted upon by the truant flock-owners. Any one might run his stock over as much grass as he could occupy without coming into collision with his neighbours. It was not until 1844, when it was found that one squatter was occupying more than 600,000 acres on the strength of one £10 license, that regulations began to limit areas, and a rule was laid down that 25 square miles was all that could be held under a single license. In 1841, 800 runs in New South Wales were yielding £20 in license fees. In 1842 the licenses of Port Phillip brought in to the

would not buy and came too near—the encroachment being considered intolerable if the smoke from his camp could be seen within ten miles—they fed off the grass before his face, and dogged his stock from the water-holes; but he who could laugh at fables and answer brag with bravado, who shouldered his way through them and seized upon a run for himself, was sworn in of 'of the brotherhood.'"—*The Squatting System of Australia*, by Capricornus (G. Ranken).

revenue the enormous sum of £190 for an area of pasture which must have been large, for, only six years later, the Port Phillip runs covered 30,000 square miles.[1] A stock tax of a halfpenny a sheep and three-halfpence a bullock seems to have been the only other impost laid on the squatters; and the revenue they provided was spent on a mounted force called the Border Police, which kept such law and order as were found in pastoral Australia in the early days. Up to 1843 the squatters had nothing to grumble at. The State, indeed, took care to put on record that squatting gave no title, either freehold or leasehold, to Crown lands. Otherwise, the surprising and insatiable flood was allowed to flow as it listed, and quietly to overspread the interior. While in the main the easy policy of Governors Darling, Bourke, and Gipps between 1827 and 1843 was wise,—was indeed the only course open to them,—the tolerance was carried too far. Had some rule limiting area been asserted sooner, a host of evils might have been averted. Had the thorny question of leasing been grasped a little more quickly, and a great deal more resolutely, Australia might have been spared the spectacle in later days of whole districts made up of "uninhabited sheep stations mortgaged to absentee companies."

In 1843 Australia was already face to face with the chief difficulties which have continued to harass two generations of land reformers. The sale of Crown lands for cash had led to speculation,—in part with English capital,—and had brought about a commercial crisis. The holders of land by quit-rent were successfully putting pressure on the Government to forego their arrears, commute their rents, and turn them into freeholders on

[1] Jenks, *The Government of Victoria*, pp. 106-112.

the cheapest terms. Side by side with land sales had come the migration of the squatters, and the phenomenon of a vast and sudden occupation of pastoral lands under no system at all—an occupation which the authorities had not foreseen, for which they were not ready, and which at first they could in no way regulate. In a few years an agrarian revolution had changed the face of the country. The progress made was astonishing, but the price paid for economic mistakes was to be heavy.

In the year last mentioned a notable land law came into operation. The commercial fever demoralising New South Wales, the chaos of the pastoral dispersion, and the spread of Wakefield's teaching, had awakened the Colonial Office to the need for further action. In 1842 was passed the notable Imperial statute,[1] which raised the upset price of Crown lands in Australia, Tasmania, and New Zealand to £1 an acre. Under this law lands were first to be offered at auction; then those for which no bid was made could be selected privately at the upset price. Pastoral licenses were to be annual. Free grants might only be made to military or naval settlers—a special privilege which was freely used and more freely abused in several colonies. Another mischievous proviso allowed special sales of large blocks of 20,000 acres and upwards to capitalists. Half the land revenue was to be spent on immigration from the Mother Country, the other half was to go towards the public service of the colony in which it was raised, and in practice was spent on public works. The Act came into force in Australia in 1843, in the year of the commercial crisis. Figures quoted by Professor Jenks show that the feverish buying of Crown lands was ere this rapidly

[1] 5 & 6 Vict. c. 36.

abating.[1] But the ruined speculators and their depressed fellow-colonists were in the mood to find a scapegoat, and they found it in the new land law and the upset price of £1 an acre. Gibbon Wakefield's name and theories were roundly cursed; while Governor Gipps, who had to administer the new Act, became a sort of whipping-boy who suffered hatred for the doings of English law-makers and Imperial theorists. The squatters declared against a system under which their land might be put up to auction or selected under their feet. They wanted leases for terms of years; the Act gave them annual licenses merely. On the other hand, the believers in small holdings and close settlement complained that with an upset price of £1 an acre, liable to be forced up further at auction, no poor man could buy a farm. In their eyes the high upset price was a barrier behind which the squatters would securely hold their vast runs through generations. Robert Lowe carried a resolution through the Legislative Council recording this curious apprehension. The twin agitations against high-priced land and short-dated pastoral licenses brought about a queer alliance between squatters and democrats, which intensified the struggle for self-government. Committees of the Council reported again and again against the Governor's land policy. Public meetings, manifestoes, embassies to England, petitions and pamphlets, kept the fight warm. With such energy and violence did Wentworth and Lowe head the opposi-

[1] The following were the purchases in five years:—

Year.	Acres.
1840	527,000
1841	117,000
1842	44,456
1843	11,000
1844	7,000

tion to Gipps[1] that the Governor's health broke down in 1846, and he went home to die. His successor, Fitzroy, was instructed to uphold the upset of £1 an acre; but on the other burning question—the grazing tenures—Earl Grey and the Colonial Office surrendered to the squatters. By the notorious Orders-in-Council of 1847, the license-holders obtained the coveted right to leases for fourteen years of all runs in outlying districts. Their rents were to be fixed on the sheep-carrying

[1] Gipps, on his side, was no mean fighter, and more than once left his mark on his foes. One rare chance was given him by Wentworth when that tribune of the people was found amongst the "land-sharks," who, when New Zealand was ceasing to be no-man's-land, tried to devour the heritage of the Maori tribes. Wentworth's mouthful was the largest of all, for he attempted to buy 20,000,000 acres in the Middle Island from nine wandering Maoris picked up in the streets of Sydney. These had no more right, by English law or Maori custom, to sell their country than they had to give a valid title to the surface of the surrounding Pacific. A Wentworth "syndicate," however, paid them the equivalent of rather more than £200 for it, and with magnificent audacity Wentworth himself called upon the Government of New South Wales in the year 1840 to ratify the purchase. His claim was debated in the Legislative Council, and Gipps's speech thereon, which may be found quoted in an appendix to the first volume of Dunmore Lang's history, is very good reading. In giving an extract from it, I may point out that the acreage of the tract in dispute was not far short of one-third of New Zealand:—

> A great deal has been said by this gentleman (Wentworth) in the course of his address to the Council, of corruption and jobbery, as well as on the love which men in office have for patronage. But, gentlemen, talk of corruption! talk of jobbery! why, if all the corruption which has defiled England since the expulsion of the Stuarts were gathered into one heap it would not make such a sum as this; if all the jobs which have been done since the days of Sir Robert Walpole were collected into one job, they would not make so big a job as the one which Mr. Wentworth asks me to lend a hand in perpetrating—the job of making him a grant of twenty millions of acres at the rate of one hundred acres for a farthing! The Land Company of New South Wales has been said to be a job; one million of acres at eighteenpence an acre has been thought to be a pretty good job; but it absolutely vanishes into nothing by the side of Mr. Wentworth's job!

Wentworth, Gipps went on to say, had quoted largely from Vattel and the *Law of Nations* to prove the right of independent people to sell their land, and had "piteously complained of the grievous injustice which we should do to the New Zealanders if we were to deny them the same right." The disallowance of this monstrous purchase is worth remembrance, not only for the light it throws on human nature and the morals of the time, but because it is an instance of the stand which the Crown so successfully took, both in Victoria and New Zealand, in refusing to recognise excessive land claims based on ridiculous bargains with natives. It was at that time that the doctrine was finally acknowledged, that the British Crown only admits one land title to be valid—a title given by itself.

capacity of their pasture at the rate of a little more than a halfpenny on each sheep they were able to carry. A sinister proviso stipulated that no run's capacity was to be estimated at less than 4000 sheep or 600 cattle. No small settlers, therefore, need apply. During the currency of the leases only the lessees themselves could buy land on the runs; they could buy blocks of not less than a quarter of a square mile each. Moreover, on the expiry of a lease, the run was to be put up to auction, and the lessee had then a pre-emptive right of purchase, or if the land were not sold, a right to a further term. In the older districts of New South Wales, and in the country round Port Phillip, and one or two other places, the plan of annual licenses was still to be followed. These settled tracts, however, looked little more than islands in the vast grassy sea which the squatters were henceforth to hold unchallenged. At one stroke the flock-owners of the wide interior were to be turned into leaseholders. In a moment a vested interest was created, to protect which powerful influences have ever since struggled, quite naturally, but to the infinite harm of progress. The numbers, too, of the new leaseholders might be recruited as more country was taken up; and the hope was held out to them of becoming great freeholders. Thus the alliance between the pastoralists and the democrats against Governor Gipps did its work, and the outcome was evil. The dwarf was maimed, the giant bore off the spoils of victory. Up to the moment of the receipt of Earl Grey's Order-in-Council, the squatters, with Wentworth at their head, had fought against the high upset, denouncing the £1 an acre as loudly as the Radicals. The instant the leases were secured they dropped the mask. A resolution moved in the Legislative Council by Robert

Lowe, condemning the high price of land, was opposed by Wentworth, and defeated by a narrow majority, wholly made up of squatters and official nominees. In vain Lowe put forth the power of sarcasm and command of argument which, in after days, made his name in the House of Commons; in vain he condemned the manufacture of "a brand-new, petty, traditionless aristocracy," and predicted the struggle of classes which indeed followed. The squatters held fast to their prey, and Lowe left them in possession. His cutting speeches perhaps inspired young Parkes and young Robertson: they produced no immediate effect except to dethrone Wentworth from his place as popular idol.

The new leases were to be applied for by sealed tender. Existing occupiers were given six months in which to tender. Failing a tender from an occupant, any one might apply. Of course, anybody might tender for new country, and of that there was still abundance waiting to be taken up. When there were several tenders for the same run, the first in order of time was to win. I need not try to describe what the rush to put in tenders was. No sort of qualification was insisted on: a tenderer might be able and willing to occupy and stock a run, or might not; might be the discoverer of pasture, or might never have seen it; might be a bushman or a bank clerk—it made no difference in official eyes. Great powers rested with the Government commissioners, and it is said these powers were often grossly abused. Amid a whirl of gambling, excitement, and jobbery, the new system came into being. The nominal expansion of run-holding was enormous. A return published in May 1849 showed that in less than two years 30,000 square miles of fresh country had been tendered for, whilst the area to be locked up for

fourteen years was already nearly as large as the British islands.

Yet the harm done was not everywhere as great as might have been anticipated. South Australia wisely protested against the Orders-in-Council, and with such logic that they were never enforced there. Mischievous as they were in New South Wales, their effect was modified by a process of making large reserves for public purposes. They might have been expected to be more mischievous still in Victoria. Both soil and climate in the latter territory were better fitted for close settlement. To lock such a country up against population would have been a sheer iniquity, and under the Orders-in-Council of 1847 nearly all of it might have been locked up securely enough in the years just before the great influx of gold-seekers. In that event the squatters would have been left face to face a few years afterwards with half-a-million of enfranchised Outlanders clamouring for the soil. That the colony was saved from the worst is due in part to the ignorance of the Home authorities, but chiefly to the nerve and common-sense of administrators on the spot. The territory—a kingdom in extent—in Eastern Australia which Earl Grey was ready to hand over to the squatters was roughly parcelled out among nearly a thousand flock-owners. Scarcely any of their runs had been surveyed before 1847, and the task of ascertaining their boundaries was no light one. An old story, still current, of one of the pioneer squatters of Port Phillip, tells how that person, when called upon by a Government surveyor to indicate the extent of his land claim, took the official up to a hilltop. Waving his arm with a sweep and pointing towards the interior, he said—"All there, as far as you see, is mine. All beyond is

my son Jack's." The boundaries of the Victorian runs in 1847 were a little less vague, perhaps, but to ascertain them meant several years of hearing disputes in commissioners' courts and of steady work for the survey department. Mr. Latrobe, the Administrator of Port Phillip, was intelligent enough to divine the frightful risk that would be run if the leases were granted. He hesitated, protested, and appealed to Sydney and to Downing Street. He cut out 680,000 acres of public reserves, and would have reserved more had not his law advisers sided with the squatters. At first the run-holders were in no great hurry to force his hand. There was no one to disturb them, and until their runs were surveyed and their leases granted, they would not have to pay more rent. When, however, the torrent of gold-diggers poured in in 1851, the pastoral owners became impatient for a securer position. This, however, the authorities were not so ready to give, for they had sense enough to see the paramount need of attaching the more steady and successful gold-seekers to the soil. Otherwise, the lucky man who wrested a few hundred or a few thousand pounds' worth of gold from the earth would be left to choose between squandering it in the drinking-hells of Melbourne or taking himself and his money back to Europe. The Surveyor-General, Captain Andrew Clarke, therefore kept his staff busy at cutting up lands for settlement, and let the squatters wait. Under the Orders-in-Council the authorities had power to make reserves on any lands for a variety of public purposes, and generally for aiding the improvement and settlement of the colony. To the surprise and indignation of the squatters they interpreted this to include the general settlement on the soil of as much of the new population as hungered for land. They continued—in

the words of the indignant squatters—to wrench away piecemeal one area after another, to sell these, and to divide them up as fast as possible into small farms.[1] Several hundred thousand acres were rescued in this way from the angry pastoralists, who cried out, with some show of reason, that Earl Grey had not intended that they should wait year after year for their leases, watching the while some of the choicest of their lands snatched from them for the use of the incomers. They looked for help to Downing Street, but Downing Street guardedly indicated that the Orders-in-Council of 1847 had been permissive and not mandatory; had only empowered the Governor to grant the leases, not ordered him to do so. The leases, moreover, need not be for fourteen years; they were to be for a term not exceeding fourteen years. This was a bombshell for the run-holders, who were fain to accept in 1854 the cold comfort of a Royal Commission. The report of this body, when given, went the way of most of its kind. All the squatters could do was to buy land themselves, and this they did freely. Self-government, which came in 1856, at first brought no adjustment, and in the year 1860 the pastoral licensees of Victoria were still holding 30,000,000 of acres, and still waiting for leases which had never been granted to them.

Free Selection, Cheap Land, and the Conditional Purchase

The Land Question enters on a fresh stage in Eastern Australia in 1861. By that time Victoria and Queens-

[1] Rusden says, rather quaintly, that "the Surveyor-General, like Goneril's steward, gnawed asunder the cords which his master the Attorney-General found too intrinse to unloose."

land had been separated from New South Wales. The Mother Country, on giving the colonies self-government, had handed over to the new parliaments the Crown lands and their management, and had washed her hands of the question. The young legislatures, after some years of wrangling, were about to deal with it. For the fourteen years between 1847 and 1861 the squatters, on the whole, had remained masters of the field. In Victoria, though they did not get their leases, they went on holding most of their land without them and were not uncomfortable. In South Australia, where they were given leases for fourteen years, the State wisely reserved a right of resumption on six months' notice —a right very seldom exercised, however. In all the colonies the flock-owners freely exercised their special right of purchase, and agriculture was in its infancy. In New South Wales it was found in 1862 that 7,000,000 acres had gone from the Crown, of which only one twenty-fourth part was under tillage. In New Zealand the acres cultivated or sown did not number a quarter of a million. In comparison with other colonies, South Australia was looked on as the agricultural settlement *par excellence;* yet, after thirty years there, out of about three-and-a-half million acres sold during that time, but a little more than one-sixth was under cultivation. Of the much larger area leased none whatever was cultivated. Victoria's case was worse; in 1861, out of four-and-a-half million acres sold, only one twenty-fifth part was under tillage, and thirty years later it was considered a source of justifiable pride that this proportion had risen to one-eighth.

The slow progress of agriculture and farm settlement were admitted on all sides to be unnatural. What was the remedy to be? Forty years ago individualism

was in the air. Free trade had conquered England, though it was not to conquer her colonies, and the general drift of political writers was to advocate freedom and simplicity of method. The Australians did not altogether escape the prevailing tendency. They owe to it the experiment of free selection, in some respects one of the most disastrous they have made. Free selection, coupled with a fixed and sufficient price, was Wakefield's theory. It has been tried in several colonies without these provisos. The classic free selection laws were passed in New South Wales, and were the Robertson Acts of 1861. Under them nearly the whole public estate of New South Wales—a country as large as France and Italy taken together—was thrown open to any purchasers who wished to buy. The price was 20s. an acre, and the buyer need find only 5s. cash. Three years were given him in which to pay the balance, and even after that he could gain further time by paying 5 per cent interest. Settlement conditions were imposed,—three years' residence, and improvement to the value of £1 an acre,—but they were evaded wholesale. Though much land was bought for use by genuine farmers, more was taken by speculators who, in flights like birds of prey, pounced down on district after district to pick the eyes out of the country.[1] Between the genuine settler and the man who bought to sell again, it might have been thought that the pastoral leaseholders would have been squeezed out altogether. There were those who looked to see the whole system of pastoral occupa-

[1] "The design of the framers of these laws was above reproach . . . but I say that the design has failed because human nature has failed too—because to break down the design we have had coming in the cupidity, the avarice, the hostility, of all classes."—N.S.W. *Hansard*, vol. lxxii. p. 434: Speech of Hon. J. H. Carruthers.

tion broken up. The great sheep-farmers were indeed sorely harassed. Much of the buying on their runs was sheer blackmailing. Men paid 5s. an acre for blocks on a run simply to force the run-holder to buy them out at a profit. There were professional selectors who played this trick again and again, sometimes taking up plots in their own name, sometimes in the name of an ally or child. Any "person" could select, and certain persons became landowners whilst still in their nurses' arms. But politicians who fancied that free selection would break up the squatting system had underrated the astuteness of the squatters. Many of these were still of the race of the old pioneers, the roughest and toughest men of Australia. They had not seized on the wilderness in their youth to surrender it in their old age without a struggle. Where the pioneers had been displaced by death or ill-fortune, their runs had commonly passed to their mortgagees, hard-headed usurers and financiers, who treated such laws as the Robertson Acts merely as frontal attacks by enemies who must be outmanœuvred. All that cunning, money, and the Legislative Council could do to save the pastoral holdings was done, and most of them were saved. The weapon of selection was turned against the selectors. Backed by the banks, the squatters bought right and left, and, using their full local knowledge, were able to acquire frontages on roads and rivers, land round lagoons and waterholes, and the good patches to be found amid inferior country. Wide stretches of leasehold were blotched, spotted, and tattooed with blocks of freehold in such a way as to bewilder and baffle would-be purchasers. In Australia this process of buying up spots was called "peacocking"; in New Zealand it was nicknamed "spotting," or—sometimes—"gridironing,"

from the oblong shape of the alternate sections bought. Not that the practice was confined to these two colonies. There were many districts in other colonies which, on coloured maps showing the scattered selections made over them, seemed

> Striped like a zebra, freckled like a pard,
> Eyed like a peacock, and all crimson barr'd.

In 1891 Mr. Seddon aptly compared one of these parti-coloured memorials of past mistakes to an old cathedral window.

Nor was all buying by the squatters merely done in self-defence. They often bought because the cheap land tempted them. Pre-emptive rights were cleverly misused. Then, when they had been exhausted, if the law forbade the squatter himself to buy more, he bought as much as he thought necessary in the names of friends or servants. On some of the stations, manager, book-keeper, overseer, shepherds, and stockmen were all land-owners, on paper. If perjury was needed to carry out the operation it was committed without compunction. Such was "dummyism"—a species of fraud on the Government almost as common at times in the colonies as smuggling once was in England.[1] Some of the

[1] On the prevalence of dummying see the following extract from a debate in the N. S. Wales Parliament (N.S.W. *Parliamentary Debates*, vol. lxii. p. 3590):—

THE MINISTER OF LANDS.—Does the hon. member imagine that because a man signs a declaration that will prevent dummying? I myself have known thousands of cases where people have signed declarations knowing them to be perjuries.

AN HON. MEMBER.—Why did you not prosecute them?

THE MINISTER OF LANDS.—How can you do so? You would have half the country in gaol if you prosecuted for all false declarations in connection with land.

In another debate in the same Chamber two years later, the following description of a dummied estate is given:—

We find that under the land laws of the past enormous private estates have been secured. I know a particular freehold at C—— which you can walk through for two days without coming to the end. I passed through the estate, and was accompanied by a member of the local land board, who knows the whole of that country. We saw several dilapidated little buildings, and in my innocence I did not know what

"dummying" was very impudent. About the year 1880 in New South Wales certain aged paupers disappeared from a benevolent asylum there. They were ultimately tracked to a large sheep-station in the interior, where they were found living in comfort supported by the owner, to whom they had rendered the convenient service of lending him their names to "dummy" certain parts of the run. This was thought to be going too far: the selections were cancelled, and public anger mingled with the laughter which greeted the exposure. Tricks of this sort are the foundation of a hundred good stories told in the colonies, usually at the expense of squatters and corporations. All the dummyism, however, was not on their side. Some of the worst was practised by professional selectors. And it is but just to admit that much of the land-buying by squatters was done in sheer desperation. They had, or thought they had, to buy or be ousted. Or, if they did not think so, the finance companies, whose clients they were, sometimes did. Many a wretched squatter ruefully mortgaged himself to buy land under orders tendered in bank parlours. So millions sterling were sunk in land, which, if spent at all, should have been spent in breeding, fencing, water-provision, and other pastoral improvements. A Royal Commission, appointed in New South Wales in 1883, condemned free selection. Amending laws were passed without much mending matters. More than thirty years after the adoption of the Robertson Acts, the Secretary for Lands in New South Wales said in Parliament—

they were. On making inquiry I found that they had been the residences of dummy selectors, who had been put up to selecting land there; and of course they selected the full complement of 640 acres. We passed more than thirty of these so-called buildings. There was one for every mile that we travelled. . . . I did not see 1000 head of sheep or cattle on the whole of that estate, and we travelled for thirty miles direct through it.—N.S.W. *Hansard*, vol. lxxii. p. 986.

In 1861, the date when the old Imperial land system may be said to have been fairly superseded by the system of free selection before survey, we had 159,834 residents in our towns, and 189,116 in the country; but after thirty years under our present land system, we have 730,100 residents in the towns, as against only 388,321 in the country districts.

. . . . .

We have alienated no less than 49,600,000 acres of land since 1861 to settle only an additional 199,000 souls in the country districts. Nearly 50,000,000 acres have been sold to settle barely 200,000 people in the country; whilst prior to 1861, 189,000 residents were settled upon 7,350,000 acres of alienated land.—N.S.W. *Hansard*, vol. lxxii. p. 434: Speech of Hon. J. H. Carruthers.

Much of this could have been prevented. By examining applicants, by enforcing stringent settlement conditions, by inspecting selections, and, above all, by limiting the right of premature resale, the public estate might have been at once husbanded and more profitably used. But such painstaking vigilance would not have been in accord with the slipshod notions of freedom and legal simplicity current forty years ago. So tardily and badly was the work of regulation done that in New South Wales, between 1862 and 1895, over 14,000,000 acres were sold unconditionally—the chief, though not the only, bad result of free selection at an insufficient price.

In Victoria free selection also had its day. The Duffy Act was in spirit a reflex of the Robertson Act. But the Victorians' faith in simplicity as a panacea was less unqualified than their neighbours'. Almost from the outset they showed more keenness for settlement conditions. Indeed, the history of the Land Question in Victoria from 1860 to 1884 may be summed up as a series of efforts to multiply small freeholds by a system of cheap land and easy purchase, coupled with more and

more stringent conditions of residence and improvement. To do this seven elaborate statutes were passed in twenty-one years. A freehold is the common goal of an honest settler's ambition, and to put such a man on the shortest road to attain it may well be the statesman's dream. But a freehold is also a saleable commodity; and to offer every applicant a freehold at less than its market value is to leave him under temptation to sell out to the first squatter, monopolist, speculator, or brother-selector who may come his way. In vain did the laws order the Victorian selector to fence his plot, or put up a hut thereon, or cultivate one acre out of ten. In vain was a beginning made of restricting a man's right of selection, first to one farm a year,—which has a touch of comedy about it,—and later by much stricter limits. Personal residence was required first for two years and a half, then for three years; yet dummying was still rife. Then the device was hit upon of withholding the selector's certificate of title for three years after allotment, and then only granting it if the conditions of residence and improvement had been carried out. During these three years he was a lessee merely, and could not sell his interest. When three years' delay was not found enough, the term of probation was lengthened to six; and then, indeed, the proviso was found to be some check on sham selection and speculative resale. Meanwhile, the terms of payment for land were made easier and easier, until a selector could take up land on paying a deposit of 1s. an acre, and could complete the purchase in twenty years by making nineteen further annual payments of 1s. Till the full £1 had been paid in this way the lessee could not transfer to any one. To raise revenue for railway making, it was enacted that the

Victorian Government might sell 200,000 acres every year by auction for cash; while to meet the wishes of would-be buyers on credit who wished neither to live on their selections nor perjure themselves, a certain amount of "non-residential selection" was frankly legalised at twice the rent payable by resident selectors. With all these openings for land-purchase, it is not wonderful that some 18,000,000 acres were parted with in thirty years. But genuine settlement was far from keeping pace with this rapid alienation. Outside her mallee scrubs, Victoria is better suited for agriculture than any other province of the continent. She was also in 1890 the most thickly-populated province. And in 1890 the proportion of Victoria under cultivation was one-twentieth. Taxpayers might take what consolation they could from remembering that land sales had brought £24,000,000 into the colony's treasury-chest.

On reviewing the land laws of the colonies, in the shape which they had taken by 1890, we are first struck by certain points of likeness. Everywhere, for instance, public lands classed as town or suburban were still disposed of by sale at auction. Moreover, except in New Zealand, no colony had abandoned auction sales of rural land at an upset price, though most had reduced the yearly quantity which could be sold in that way. In New South Wales the Minister of Lands might have 200,000 acres sold every year under the hammer; in Queensland the quantity was 150,000 acres; in Victoria it had been reduced to 100,000 acres. As a rule, the upset price fixed was £1 an acre, but it might be lower—10s., for example, in Queensland and Western Australia, and 5s. in South Australia.

Selection for cash at a fixed price still went on in

New Zealand, where cash purchases were unconditional, though no selector could buy more than a square mile of first-class land, or 2000 acres of second-class. Dummyism, therefore, was resorted to, and there were some flagrant cases as late as 1890. The land sold brought in on the average about £1 an acre. Less land, however, was yearly bought for cash than was taken up on the deferred payment system or under a new tenure—the pseudo-perpetual lease—which was legalised in 1882, and will be described presently.

Queensland went beyond New Zealand in the kind of unconditional selection which its laws permitted; for there it was allowed on deferred payments, spread over twenty years, during which the selector was not called on to do anything except pay one-twentieth of the purchase-money every year. It is but fair to note that the price to be paid under this easy-going system was to be one-third more than that of land sold under settlement conditions.

The tenure, however, generally in favour in the eighties was purchase by deferred payments. The details varied in the colonies, but the principle was much the same. In Queensland an agricultural selector could take up 160 acres, and by living on it for five years out of the first seven, and fencing it, or making other improvements to the value of 10s. an acre, could obtain the freehold at the end of seven years for half-a-crown an acre. Any one could take up a farm not larger than 1280 acres, and, after making certain improvements, obtain a lease for fifty years at a rent which might be as low as threepence an acre. In Victoria 320 acres could be selected and bought at 1s. an acre yearly for twenty years. In New Zealand 640 could be selected, but 25 per cent of the

purchase-money had to be deposited and the rest paid within ten years. The price, too, was one-fourth heavier than if the sale were for cash. In South Australia leases for twenty-one years were given, with a right of renewal for a similar term; these were convertible into freeholds by purchase after the first six years. In Western Australia, where, in 1840, the minimum price of land had been raised to £1 an acre and lowered in 1864 to 10s. an acre, the system of conditional selection was—on paper—very tempting. Farms of from 100 to 1000 acres could be selected in certain tracts set apart as agricultural areas. The 10s. an acre charged for this land could be paid in twenty yearly instalments of 6d. each. On making the final payment the selector obtained the fee-simple, and the bad practice of other colonies was followed in Western Australia of allowing the whole payment to be completed at any time within the twenty years. The practice was bad, because it enabled the selector to sell out as soon as tempted, and encouraged dummyism. The conditions of residence and improvement were much the same in Western Australia as in the eastern colonies. In the west, too, the mistaken plan was followed of allowing selection without residence on payment of double rent or purchase-money. Small free grants of land were given to immigrants—no grant to exceed more than 150 acres to a family. The value of these entirely depended on the quality and position of the land open to selection in this way. That the grants were not very powerful magnets may be judged from the population of Western Australia. That had grown to about 50,000 in 1890, after sixty-five years of settlement. These grants to newly-landed immigrants were also made in Queensland, where it

was officially admitted that the system was a failure, and that land orders, as they were called, were seldom used unless there was a prospect of making money out of them by resale. In Tasmania, in 1890, twelve land laws encumbered the statute-book, but all had conspicuously failed to fix population on the island soil. Selection and deferred payment were legalised there also; any one could take up 320 acres and buy it in twelve years at a price which, with interest and survey fees, came to nearly 30s. an acre. Some one had to live on the allotment, but it might be the selector's tenant or servant. A selector with capital—or with some one else's capital—would probably prefer to buy the land outright for cash, as he could do for the usual £1 an acre.

In 1882 New Zealand decided to make trial of a new form of tenure, the perpetual lease. It was the outcome of several years' agitation against further sales of land for cash. Those who introduced it meant that it should be as good as its name—a lease for ever, not convertible into a freehold. It met with great opposition, and the friends of the freehold succeeded in inserting into the enactment legalising it a clause giving the lessee the right of purchase at the prairie value. With that addition it at once became popular, though it contained a proviso that after thirty years there should be a revaluation of land, with later revaluations after periods of twenty-one years. Thirty years, however, is a long time in a colony, and as the lessees would have the right of purchasing their land at something like £1 an acre, as soon as they had fenced it and cultivated one-fifth of it, the spectre of an increased rent did not frighten them. The rent was to be 5 per cent on the unimproved value of the land. Though no perpetual lease of good

agricultural land could be of more than 640 acres, nor of more than 2000 acres if the land were second-class, more than 1,000,000 acres had been taken up in this way before the year 1891. Of the land held under settlement conditions in the colony half was under perpetual lease. The lessees had already begun to turn their holdings into freehold, and though high rates of interest and a depressed land-market checked them, there were signs that the lease would be found perpetual in name only. Perpetual leases also began to be granted in South Australia under the Crown Lands Act of 1888. Unlike the so-called perpetual leases of New Zealand, they were not convertible into freeholds. The lessee could transfer his lease to a purchaser, but only with the consent of the Lands Commissioner. His rent was freshly appraised every fourteen years. In valuing his land any improvements made by him were exempted. This was also the practice in New Zealand.

As rather more than 750,000,000 of acres were occupied in sheep and cattle runs by pastoral tenants of the Crown at the beginning of 1891, it will be understood that squatters as a class had survived free selection. In the Australian interior they had great, though treacherous, allies. Scorching sun, rainless skies, hot winds, and dust-storms beat back generations of selectors more effectually than dummyism and pea-cocking. The mountains, too, which cover half southern New Zealand, sheltered a respectable remnant of the pastoral race; they still rented more than 12,000,000 acres in the islands—acres which were not nearly as well subdivided as even pastoral country might have been. Thirteen holders occupied 165 runs, covering 2,541,000 acres, and with nearly 1,000,000 sheep. The passing of the more tempting and better-watered

pastures into the hands of the large freeholders, however, had shifted the centre of the agrarian controversy. The conflict was no longer hottest round the Crown tenants and their relations with the State. The old feeling against them was being diverted to the great freeholds. In Victoria, New Zealand, and South Australia the squatters proper were coming to be regarded as a broken and dwindling tribe, not undeserving of sympathy in their struggles with droughts, storms, rabbits, and low prices. Even in New South Wales they were scarcely looked upon now as enemies of the people. In Queensland, where they occupied 280,000,000 acres in large blocks, public discontent was still intense.[1] In all colonies the owning or leasing of land by big companies was justly disliked, and in Queensland this unpopular form of land-holding had assumed enormous dimensions. It was said that 130,000,000 acres were leased there by forty-five financial institutions. Absentee ownership by individuals, objectionable as it was, was thought to be less hopeless than occupation by the servants of money-lending companies. An absentee proprietor must die sooner or later; but financial institutions seldom die in Australia—they are reconstructed.

Many as the laws dealing with run-holding had been between 1860 and 1890, they had shown certain common

[1] "The smallest station that I was on covered 200 square miles, and carried 66,000 sheep, besides cattle and horses. It employed eight permanent hands! Labour is not wanted except at shearing time. The largest station that I was on can hardly have represented less than £400,000 of capital, and it employed only seventy hands. On a cattle station the labour employed would be even less."—Lady Lugard's *Letters from Queensland*, p. 73.

"What the scale is may be partly realised from the size of the first station upon which I was received. It had an extent of 1500 square miles, and carried nearly half a million sheep. Its wool clip for this year was 5000 bales, which, estimating them at £12 apiece, would represent a return of £60,000 from wool alone, and the stock for sale may be fairly estimated at another £20,000 or £25,000. From the beginning it is impressed upon you that the pastoral industry is the industry of the rich man."—*Ibid.* p. 67.

tendencies. In Eastern Australia, during the fourteen years after the Orders-in-Council of 1847, the squatters suffered little disturbance. Thereafter they weathered the storm of free selection, and, when that had somewhat spent its violence, the time was ripe for compromise. It was admitted that immense territories inland were fit for nothing but pastoral occupation, and that it was better that these should be leased for terms of years than held on a precarious annual tenure. It was thought, on the other hand, that, even in purely pastoral country, the size of the larger runs should, where possible, be reduced. Where country was mixed it should remain open for selection and occupation by cultivators, small graziers, or by settlers who combined both tillage and stock-rearing. It was recognised that while Earl Grey's Orders-in-Council had gone too far in one direction, universal free selection had erred widely in the other. It was time to discriminate. By general consent the old demand for restricting all squatting tenure to annual licenses to occupy was given up. In Victoria leases were granted for fourteen years; in Western New South Wales and Queensland—as in New Zealand and South Australia—for twenty-one. Rents were raised everywhere to rates undreamt of in the first forty years of squatting. In Victoria they were equivalent to 1s. a sheep and 5s. on each head of cattle. In New South Wales the rents of Crown lands amounted to but £268,000 in the year 1884; in spite of resumptions and droughts they increased to £655,000 in 1898. Even in Queensland, where 6d. per square mile had once been thought enough to pay for new country, the rates had been raised to a scale ranging from 10s. to 90s. a square mile. Pre-emptive rights were severely restricted. On the whole, in 1890, the terms on which

pastoral tenancies were held in most of the colonies were not unfair to the public. In New South Wales and Queensland, moreover, under Acts passed in 1884, half of each run was "resumed"; that is to say, the State took the right of selling any portion of it at any time to selectors. Until it was sold the pastoral tenant might have an annual license to occupy it, and continue to feed his stock on it. The other half of the run was leased to him, and during his term was safe against selection. Efforts were made to let "resumed" land in small grazing farms. These represented the attempt to substitute reasonably close pastoral occupation for overgrown runs. In Victoria small grazing farms were not to exceed 1000 acres; in New Zealand the area aimed at was 5000 acres; in Western New South Wales it might extend to 10,000; and in Queensland land of magnificent distances—20,000 acres was not thought too much. The Victorian term of lease, fourteen years, was the shortest. In New Zealand a term of twenty-one years was granted, with a right to a renewal for another twenty-one at a revised rental. In Queensland the lease was for thirty years, with a fresh appraisement of rent after the first ten. The rents were light enough. In Victoria, for example, they varied from 2d. to 4d. an acre, and in New Zealand from 1½d. to 3d. Despite some dummying, the grazing-farm system was generally showing good results in 1890, though in New South Wales great areas of the "resumed" land lay unlet and unoccupied year after year, yielding no rent to the State.

Though in this sketch I have perforce to pass over numberless details, enough has been written to show that the administration of land laws had come to be exceedingly complicated, and much too burdensome for one central office. Each colony had to be divided into

lands districts, local offices had to be opened, and the local officials to be aided and supervised. To this end, in New South Wales, Victoria, New Zealand, and South Australia, a system was adopted of nominating district land boards to sit with the local commissioner of Crown lands and superintend administrative work. On them fell the responsibility of checking the classification and valuing of lands, the fixing and reappraisement of rents, the examination of applicants and selectors, the passing or refusal of transfers, the forfeiting of selections for non-compliance with settlement conditions, and the detection of dummyism. On the whole, the troublesome and delicate work of these boards has been done conscientiously and well. If they have not stamped out fraud and favouritism, they have reduced them. Their duties are minute and tedious, and they have to punish as well as assist. It speaks well for them, then, that the complaints against them are comparatively few.

At the end of the year 1890 the land laws were, in effect, such as I have sketched. The same point of time may be used for a review of the results of these laws, and their administration, before the new democratic wave swept over public life. In four of the five colonies figures are obtainable from which it is easy to see the measure of success obtained by the throng of law-makers who had competed in the effort to settle a race of small farmers on the soil, and, to use their favourite phrase, preserve the people's heritage. The outcome was a mournful commentary on the effects of auction sales, pre-emptive rights, and free selection at low prices. In New South Wales nearly 40,000,000 acres of the best land had been parted with as early as the year 1884, and in 1891 the process was still going on at the rate of

over a million acres annually.[1] Nearly half of the land sold was owned by 679 companies or persons. Fifteen million acres had been sold unconditionally, almost all of which had gone to build up great estates. A still more sinister sign was the failure to attach selectors to the soil by conditional sales. More than half the original selectors of land under conditions had ceased to hold it. In New Zealand, where, with a more abundant rainfall, the position should have been better, it was not. About 19,400,000 acres had been alienated, of which 10,400,000 were held by 584 owners.[2] In South Australia things were not quite so bad, but they were

[1] "The holdings in the country in 1861 were represented by 15,650 occupants (proprietors). . . . To-day, with our enormous alienation, the holdings are represented by 41,400 occupants; or, in other words, over 50,000,000 acres of land have been alienated since 1861, or are in course of alienation now, for an increase of 25,750 rural occupants—that is, at the rate of 2000 acres for each occupant. In 1861 the average size of a holding was 280 acres, but in 1893 the average size of a holding was 762 acres."—N.S.W. *Hansard*, vol. lxxii. p. 434: Speech of Hon. J. H. Carruthers, September 1894.

[2] In the House of Representatives, New Zealand, in 1894, the member for Nelson drew attention to the following state of things:—

New Zealand Landholders.		Unimproved Value of Estates.
6	held	£2,562,780
18	,,	2,549,547
79	,,	5,328,842
200	,,	5,996,897
381	,,	5,364,802
684		£21,802,868

Those were the upper steps of the ladder. At the lower end came 45,192 holders, in whose hands was land worth rather less than a million and three-quarters.

Putting towns and boroughs aside, and taking the country landholders of not less than five acres each, the figures showed that

	Landholders.		Estates, Unimproved Value.
	470	held	£14,934,968
while	38,465	,,	23,393,494

In other words, less than one-eightieth of the country landholders had two-fifths (in value) of the land.—N.Z. *Hansard*, vol. lxxxiv. p. 195: Speech of Mr. John Graham.

bad enough. 1283 owners held half the land alienated; 539 held nearly $6\frac{3}{4}$ millions of acres. In these three colonies 1255 proprietors owned 35,000,000 acres, an area rather larger than England. In Victoria the State had parted with $22\frac{1}{2}$ million acres. No table giving the comparative size of holdings in Victoria was issued, but in the year 1892, 863 proprietors paid land tax for about 7,000,000 acres held in estates averaging about 7000 acres each. All these areas, of course, were outside the tracts in each colony held by the pastoral tenants of the Crown. In Tasmania the plentiful rainfall and delightful climate had failed to attract population. Founded in 1803, the colony after seventy-eight years could not show 150,000 people. More than a fourth of the public lands had been sold. That would not have mattered had they not included the best soil, or had they been cultivated. As it was, agriculture proper had actually declined between 1860 and 1890, though in the latter year dairy farming was beginning to spread. Though Queensland had persevered with State-aided immigration after it had been given up by the other colonies, and its Government had, from first to last, paid the passages of 200,000 immigrants, its population was but 400,000, and its agriculture but in the primitive stages. Of Western Australia it is needless to speak. Farmers in all the colonies were feeling acutely the great fall in the price of cereals, which had not yet reached its lowest point. This had intensified the effect of bad land laws, but was no excuse for them, though it was often pleaded as an excuse.

Accurate statistics of land holdings in the less populous colonies were not to be had. Still, it was not impossible to make a rough estimate of the size and number of farms there. Careful calculation seems to

show that in Australia and New Zealand in 1891 the ownership of about 125,000,000 acres had passed from the State to companies and private persons. Of this, from 16,000,000 to 17,000,000 acres were under tillage or sown with artificial grasses. Perhaps 25,000,000 acres were held in blocks of not more than a thousand acres each—that is to say, one-fifth the public land alienated had been closely settled. The pastoral leases still covered a territory six times as large as the lands in private hands, and of the pastoral runs the State still retained the fee-simple. But the extent of the great tracts which had been given away or sold, and which were the pick of the country, was nearly as large as the surface of France. The amount under cultivation or artificially grassed was perhaps equal to one-half of England. Less than half this modest area was under crops or broken up, and almost all the artificial grassing was in one colony—New Zealand. If, then, the main object of the long procession of land laws and regulations throughout the century from Governor Phillip's time to 1891 had been to promote close settlement, and if the main object of promoting close settlement was to foster intense cultivation, the figures of 1891 were staggering. Much of the alienated land supplied more food for reflection than for consumption. A map of Australia and New Zealand showing the land holdings as they were in 1890 would bear a curious resemblance to certain gloomy descriptions of the British occupation of South Africa in the closing weeks of 1900. The people occupied the cities, towns, and suburbs; large patches round these and round the mines were closely settled; there were fairly extensive strips of farm settlement along some of the coasts, and long ragged ribbons of it stretched across the country corresponding roughly

to the greater lines of communication. Of the open expanses inland some lay waste and empty; the rest was held by the pastoral tenants, and by the great freeholders, or their masters the mortgage-companies; and there, flocks and herds could graze and wander for days together without being disturbed by the apparition of a man.

The more heated assailants of land monopoly were given to saying that the public estate had been stolen. Pieces of it had—or at least had been got by fraud, perjury, and subornation of perjury. Other pieces had been acquired by processes like peacocking and gridironing—legal, but occasionally savouring of sharp practice. Far the greater part, however, had been bought and paid for straightforwardly as the law required, and the sums paid by land-buyers into the colonial treasuries had been large. In Victoria and New South Wales a total amount of about £55,000,000 had been received from land sales, and of this money the taxpayers had the benefit. The slow growth of rural settlement and tillage was partly due to natural obstacles, and to economic checks—such as the falling price of wheat—which had their origin outside Land Acts. Nevertheless, settlement had been greatly retarded by bad laws and worse administration, and for these the financiers and the class which in 1890 still owned or occupied nineteen-twentieths of the soil were chiefly to blame.

Land Taxes

This is a convenient place for a word on the land taxes, which are levied in five out of the seven colonies, and which are there supplemented by taxes on income. In Queensland and Western Australia, where there are

neither land nor income taxes, their place is supposed to be taken, in part, by a tax on the dividends of companies.

A special interest belongs to the land taxes in Victoria, New Zealand, and South Australia, because they were admittedly imposed with a double object,—to make the larger landowners pay their fair share of taxation, and to bring about gradually the subdivision, or, in cant phrase, the "bursting-up," of the great freehold estates. In New South Wales, on the other hand, the object of Mr. Reid and his friends, when they laid on the land tax in 1895, was to make good the revenue lost by remitting customs duties. The Reid land tax was the logical sequence of the Reid free-trade tariff.

The amount raised by land taxes in the colonies which levy them is small—almost ludicrously small—when compared with their customs revenue. The seven colonies grouped together draw nearly two-sevenths of their revenues from customs and excise, and only about one forty-fifth part from land tax. If we exclude from the calculation the two colonies which do not profess to tax land, the figures for 1899 compare thus :—

	Customs and Excise.	Land Tax.
New Zealand . .	£2,187,859	£293,627
New South Wales . .	1,735,621	286,227
Victoria . . .	2,267,141	108,222
South Australia . .	643,075	78,406
Tasmania . .	448,120	15,106
	£7,281,816	£781,588

In the five colonies, then, where there are land taxes, they do not yield much more than one-tenth of the sum raised from customs and excise. In the other two colonies there is no land tax at all. Nor is there

the least likelihood of the proportion of land tax to customs duties being greatly altered in Australia in the near future. The tariff about to be adopted by the Federal Parliament will certainly not lower the position held by indirect taxation in Australia. In New Zealand the farmers are almost all-powerful, and the Progressives have for the present been turned aside from further projects of "bursting-up" the great freeholds by taxation. They are satisfied to trust to time, and meanwhile are obtaining land for settlement by the process of repurchase, presently to be described. Small, however, as the sums brought into the five treasuries by land taxes are, and absurd as it is to speak of any of the colonies as fields where the single-tax school is dominant or even powerful, the land taxes have filled a great place in the public eye. The attention they have attracted is out of all proportion to their fiscal importance. Politicians have been interested by the battles fought over them; economists are curious about their details. Then, too, every land tax is hated and feared by the great landowners, and by the financial institutions whose interests are entwined with the landowners', not so much for its actual weight and effect, as for the principles it stands for and the attacks it may foreshadow. Though the comparative lightness of the tax in most colonies testifies to the strength of the landed interest, still, so long as a land tax is on the statute-book,—and this applies especially to the tax where it is graduated,—the larger owners see in it a screw which only requires a few more turns to become unbearable. At any time a gust of public temper may, they think, cause these turns to be given, and the day of "bursting-up" to come at last.

At present the lords of many acres, most of them at

any rate have more to fear from droughts and low prices than from the visits of the tax-gatherer. In New South Wales, for instance, the tax is but a penny in the pound on the capital value of landed estates, after the value of all buildings, improvements, plant, and live stock has been deducted therefrom. Moreover, the first £240 worth of land owned by any person or company is exempted, and an allowance is made for any mortgage there may be on the property. The mortgagee, of course, has to pay income tax on the interest he receives on his mortgage. His mortgagor, the landowner, is allowed to deduct from his land tax a sum equal to the income tax which the mortgagee pays on account of the particular mortgage in which they are both concerned.

The Tasmanian land tax is but ½d. in the £, and the landowner is permitted to deduct $\frac{1}{16}$d. in the £ from the tax due on so much of the value of his estate as is represented by outstanding mortgages. On the other hand, the tax is levied on the whole capital value of landed property, and not on the unimproved value alone. Nevertheless its burden is light, as is shown by the exceedingly small amount returned by it. The private lands of the colony, with their improvements and the live stock upon them, may probably be valued at nearly £30,000,000. A tax which draws only some £15,000 a year from this substantial estate cannot be called heavy.

In Victoria we come for the first time to a land tax showing manifest traces of the handiwork of Radical politicians.

The Victorian land tax was imposed in 1877, and was the advanced guard of the series of not too successful attacks which the Progressives have made on land

monopoly in the seven colonies. It was during the debates on it that the cant phrase "the bursting-up of great estates" first took the public ear. The reformers had a strong case and a just cause, for the almost unpeopled great estates of Victoria were an obstacle to the progress of a colony the area of which is very far from limitless. There were ugly stories, too, about the acquisition or enlargement of certain noted properties. After a great struggle the reformers had their way. At any rate they passed an Act under which a land tax was levied which at first sight seemed destined to fall on the largest proprietors with crushing weight. As the object was to break up wide holdings of rural land, all estates under 640 acres were exempted—a condition which virtually released all city landlords from the tax. To be subject to it even a rural estate had, moreover, to be worth £2500. Several pieces of land, however, if the property of one man and lying within five miles of each other, were grouped together as one estate; and only one exemption was allowed to each proprietor, however many estates he might own. The tax was to be $1\frac{1}{4}$ per cent on the capital value of the land.

Then comes in the extraordinary feature of the Act—its artificial principle of assessment. This, when adopted, was believed to be certain to ensure the "bursting-up" which was the object of the law's framers; and this in practice has been what has defeated this very object. The method of assessment, however arbitrary, was easy to understand. All taxable land was to be valued according to its ability to carry that important animal the Australian sheep, and to this end was divided into four classes, each estimated to be worth a fixed sum per acre. The rates and method of settling them are thus shown:—

	Value per acre.
Class I. carrying 2 sheep or more to the acre .	£4 0 0
Class II. „ 1½ sheep per acre . .	3 0 0
Class III. „ 1 sheep per acre . .	2 0 0
Class IV. „ under 1 sheep per acre . .	1 0 0

Had this scale represented the full value of the land, the tax would have fallen very heavily on all owners. At the first glance, however, it is plain that land worth more than £4 an acre—and there is rural land in Victoria worth several times £4 an acre—escapes very lightly. Nor is this all. In practice the method so works out that the average tax paid is a little less than 4d. an acre. It varies from 9½d. an acre on the highest class to less than 2½d. on the lowest. It is, therefore, on the face of it, less severe than the higher degrees of the graduated land tax of New Zealand. But, as already hinted, the assessed values do not represent the full values of the estates, or anything like them. The proprietors as a body pay on about half the true value. The result is simple: the tax has not "burst up" the estates. The acreage of the doomed properties has not diminished; it has increased:—

	Year.	Acres.
Area of estates . .	1880	6,894,746
„ „ . .	1894	7,082,909
„ „ . .	1899	7,280,223

The number of proprietors, which was 818 twenty years ago, has only increased to 887, so that while the area of taxable land is larger, the average extent held by each owner is a little larger also. It was 8154 acres in the year 1882, and 8208 acres in 1899. Nor does the tax show any better as a source of revenue. The taxable value of the land subject to it was £10,025,888 in the year 1880, and had shrunk to £9,612,690 in

1899. There had been a decrease in value of £413,198. The sole outcome of the tax, therefore, is to extract about £125,000 a year from 887 proprietors who own a mass of real estate probably worth more than twenty millions sterling.

On the smaller estates in South Australia the land tax is but ½d. in the £, and is levied on unimproved value only. It is doubled on all estates the unimproved value of which is over £5000. Absentee landowners pay 20 per cent extra. Still, it is not a heavy tax. A common misconception of its incidence represents the land tax as aimed at the squatters and larger wool-growers as a class. The squatters, properly so-called, are tenants of the Crown, and Crown lands pay no land tax either in South Australia or the other colonies. An understanding of this important exception would have prevented a large amount of misapplied pity being wasted on pastoral tenants in the colonies by certain writers and speakers in England and France. The squatters are not troubled by land taxes; the large freeholders sometimes are. The South Australian land tax was first imposed in 1884, and at first was not graduated. That it has been made mildly progressive is chiefly due to the campaign carried on in 1890 by Cockburn, then Prime Minister. His proposal was a tax of ½d. in the £ on the ground value of estates up to £5000, progressing by steps of ¼d. in the £ until a maximum of 3d. in the £ on estates worth over £100,000 was reached. This would have made some at least of the larger properties untenable. Speaking on the 19th of March 1890, Cockburn said of them—

> In all parts of the colony the large estates are not only holding their own, but are insidiously creeping onwards, taking advantage

of every bad season and every commercial crisis,—slowly but surely depopulating the country and strangling the townships.

. . . . . .

We find that of the ten estates which will have to make the largest contribution, eight are the property of persons living outside the colony.

He appealed to the country, and with success. It is one thing, however, to elect a majority and a drastic change; it is another thing for that majority to hold together. The Cockburn tax had, of course, roused the fiercest opposition of threatened interests. Before their anger and their tactics several half-hearted supporters of the progressive tax flinched, and the ministry and their proposal fell together. Some concession, however, had to be made to public opinion. The men who had defeated Cockburn paid homage to the feeling he had aroused by recasting the existing land-tax law so as to make the great holders and absentees pay a somewhat fairer share of the impost.

Turning to New Zealand, we find that the scheme which Cockburn had not the good luck to carry was curiously like one which Ballance, with better fortune, brought forward a few months later. The Ballance land-tax Bill was circulated in August 1891. As much earlier as 1878, indeed, Ballance, then treasurer in Sir George Grey's ministry, had introduced a land-tax Bill, which was carried. But on the fall of the Grey Government in 1879,—a fall brought about in great measure by the opposition stirred up against the land tax,—it was repealed, and a property tax of 1d. in the £ on the capital value of all property, real and personal, was substituted for it. The property tax, falling as it did on all farm improvements, was exceedingly unpopular amongst the smaller farmers. Their improve-

ments were often made with the labour of their own hands. They felt bitterly that for every year's hard work on their little properties—for every yard of progress made in the sweat of their brows—their tax was added to at the next assessment. Manufacturers, shopkeepers, and trading companies also found the tax unjust. It hit them as hard in bad years as in good. A trader might be taxed as heavily on his stock, plant, and buildings in a year in which he made no income as in a year in which his profits were large.

At any rate he was always taxed, profits or no profits; yet professional men and salary-earners paid no tax on their incomes, however comfortable, for there was no income tax. To these solid grounds for discontent was added the sentiment nourished by the writings of George and Wallace. Avowed single-taxers were, indeed, very few in number, as they still are; but the doctrines of the land-nationalisers and single-taxers were accepted to the extent of distinguishing between real estate and personal property as subjects for taxation. A line was also drawn between ground-values and improvements. Large tracts of most of the great freeholds were unimproved. Feeling ran high against land monopoly in 1890, and higher still against absentee ownership. Ballance, the author of the land tax of 1879, returned to power in January 1891 with a strong majority at his back. Most of his followers were prepared to sweep away the property tax. What tax should replace it was an open question. Ballance's own election speeches created an impression that he favoured moderate change, and would accept some sort of compromise. Whether this was indeed so or not, it is certain that he had men around and behind him who were ready to go what then seemed great lengths. In

effect, the land- and income-tax Bill of the Ballance Government, laid before the General Assembly in the winter of 1891, was greeted as a measure of revolution. It did indeed herald a species of political revolution which is still in peaceful progress. As an agrarian and fiscal Act it was not nearly as alarming as the landowners took it to be at the time. It was but an apology for a "bursting-up" tax after all. It went, however, some way in the direction of the Progressive ideal; and while it cut a political party from old moorings and started it on a long and venturous voyage, it also asserted more than one principle of the new school of tax-makers.

In the first place it relieved personal property, and —as finally shaped in 1893—improvements and live stock also, from the penny in the pound of the property tax, and left them tax-free. It imposed an elaborately graduated land tax, ascending on a scale which made it light on the small and heavy on the large landowners. It treated the mortgagees of the smaller estates as part owners thereof to the extent of their mortgages, and as liable to pay the land tax to that extent. It exempted the smallest class of peasant farmers entirely—running counter in that to the cardinal principle of the single-taxers. It made absentee landowners pay more than residents. Finally, it substituted a progressive income tax for that portion of the property tax which had fallen on personal estate.

Under the Ballance law, ground values up to £500 escape taxation unless the owner possesses more than £1500 worth. For every £2 of value over £1500 he loses £1 of exemption. The owner of land, therefore, the unimproved value of which is £2500, pays land tax on the whole thereof. Apart from the exemption, the ordinary land tax is a penny on every pound of an

estate's capital value. The landowner, however, is allowed to deduct from his taxable value the amount of any mortgage on his property. The money-lender is treated as part owner, pays land tax on his mortgage as though it were land, and is forbidden to make his mortgagor contract to pay the whole tax. Of course the farmers were warned that the rates of interest would be raised to recoup the money-lender the amount of his tax—a prophecy which signally failed of fulfilment.

Estates with a ground value of £5000 and over are also charged with a special graduated tax with which the mortgagee has nothing to do. The landowner pays the whole of it, no matter how heavily his property may be mortgaged. For the graduated tax is a policy tax laid on to discourage the holding of large areas, and especially of areas heavily mortgaged. It was meant to be a burden which the larger owners should feel. The easiest way of explaining the grading is to set its steps out in full :—

Where the value is	£5,000	and is less than	£10,000,	one-eighth of a penny in the pound sterling.
,,	,,	£10,000	,,	,,	£15,000, two-eighths of a penny.
,,	,,	£15,000	,,	,,	£20,000, three-eighths of a penny.
,,	,,	£20,000	,,	,,	£25,000, four-eighths of a penny.
,,	,,	£25,000	,,	,,	£30,000, five-eighths of a penny.
,,	,,	£30,000	,,	,,	£40,000, six-eighths of a penny.
,,	,,	£40,000	,,	,,	£50,000, seven-eighths of a penny.
,,	,,	£50,000	,,	,,	£70,000, one penny.
,,	,,	£70,000	,,	,,	£90,000, one penny and one-eighth.

Where the value is £90,000 and is less than £110,000, one penny and two-eighths.

" " £110,000 " " £130,000, one penny and three-eighths.

" " £130,000 " " £150,000, one penny and four-eighths.

" " £150,000 " " £170,000, one penny and five-eighths.

" " £170,000 " " £190,000, one penny and six-eighths.

" " £190,000 " " £210,000, one penny and seven-eighths.

" " £210,000 or exceeds that sum, twopence.

These rates, be it noted, are paid in addition to the penny of the ordinary land tax.

The tribal lands still occupied by the Maori owe no land tax. Where lands owned by Maori are leased to Europeans the landlords are liable to pay it, but are charged only ½d. in the £ instead of 1d. paid by the whites. No Maori landlord is liable to pay the graduated tax.

Where the owners of mortgages are aged or infirm persons whose incomes are less than £200 a year, the commissioner of taxes has power to allow such exemption as he deems just, and a number of widows and orphans are excused more or less of their tax under this clause.

Absentees pay twenty per cent more tax than residents. An absentee is a landlord who has been out of the colony for a year. In South Australia the period of absence fixed is two years. Until 1900, the period of absence allowed by the New Zealand law was three years. As it was found that some absentees out-flanked the special tax by paying short periodical visits to the colony, the three years were reduced to one.

The result of the system of exemptions is that six-

sevenths of the landowners of New Zealand pay no land tax at all; the taxpayers number but some 13,000. Of the £294,000 collected from them in 1900, about £72,000 represented the graduated tax. The extra sum paid by absentees was very small—about £1000.

It is not easy—indeed it is impossible—to arrive at the effect of the New Zealand tax upon the size of the land-holdings in that colony. For some years past the annual table issued by the Registrar-General there has been almost spoiled for comparative purposes by the mixing up therein of the pastoral leases with land held in freehold or under other tenures. In consequence, the table of 1900 cannot be compared with that of 1891, from which the pastoral leases were excluded. All that can be done is to compare the figures of 1896 with those of 1900, and even these must be given encumbered in both cases with the pastoral leases, which have nothing to do with land taxation. It is, however, clear that nothing startling is being done by the land tax.

	Year 1896. Acres.	Year 1900. Acres.
Total occupied lands . .	33,312,212	34,422,653
Held in blocks of 5000 acres and more . . .	20,755,774	20,665,601
Number of holdings of above-mentioned size . .	844	854

On examining the official table in detail it does, however, appear that in the very largest class of holdings—that of the land held in blocks of 50,000 acres and upwards—a certain process of subdivision is going on. In 1896 the figures in this division showed that 10,126,643 acres were held in 112 holdings; in 1900 the area had decreased to 9,477,632, and the holdings to 100. In round numbers, 650,000 acres had been taken

out of this class. On looking into the next division—that of holdings of between 20,000 and 50,000 acres—it appears that this showed an increase of 622,000 acres. It is possible to see in this some sign that the subdivision which the tax was intended to stimulate has been begun. This is put beyond doubt if we turn to a parliamentary return showing, not the acreage, but the values of freehold properties in 1892 and 1900 respectively. In the former year (the first in which the land tax was collected), the freeholds of the colony were valued at over ninety-two millions. In 1900 their value had risen to nearly one hundred and ten millions But all the increase had been in the small or middle-sized estates. The value of estates in the class worth £50,000 and upwards each had fallen from nineteen millions to fifteen millions. So, though the value of estates worth between £20,000 and £50,000 was larger in 1900 than eight years before, and though nearly as much land was held in blocks of over 5000 acres in 1900 as in 1896, it seems that the great holdings are beginning to shrink at last. Of such change as there has been, the State repurchase law has been a main cause. Prosperous years, and the demand for land which they have brought, must also be reckoned. But these do not account for all the shrinkage, and a share of the credit must be given to the land tax, comparatively small as that share is.

It might have been thought that in colonies where general land taxes are imposed the rating of ground values, at least in towns and suburbs, would be usual, if not universal. Curiously enough, this is so far from being the case that before 1897 there was only one colony in which rating on the unimproved value of

land was legal, and that colony was Queensland, which has never levied a general land tax. There, in 1890, a law made it compulsory for local bodies to levy their rates, general as well as special, upon the fair unimproved value of land. In February 1901 the town-clerk of Brisbane reported that the effect of the Act had been to induce landowners to build more readily than formerly, and that the working of the statute had given general satisfaction.

No hurry to follow Queensland's example was shown elsewhere. Indeed, no rating law of precisely the same kind is yet on the statute-book of any other colony. The sketch already given of the land taxes has shown in what they differ from any possible rating system. Neither the New Zealand nor the Victorian tax, for instance, touches the peasant farmer. The small landowner escapes from them. Rates must be levied on the smallest piece of land as well as the largest, and in the same proportion to the value. The number of small landowners in the colonies is great enough to cause much hesitation in levying any rate on land-values. In towns and suburbs the shopkeepers, clerks, and artisans are very often their own landlords. They live in cottages or unpretentious wooden houses, comfortable but far from costly, so the proportion their improvements bear to the ground value of their land may not always be very large. It is easy to appeal to their fears by enlarging upon the increase of rates which may come upon them if the burden is to be transferred from buildings and other improvements to the unearned increment. It is easy, too, to impress them with the apparent unfairness of exempting from rates the immense mass of wealth represented by factories, warehouses, large shops, and the dwelling-

houses of the wealthy. Why should these be relieved from taxation while the burden on the workman's quarter-acre section is made greater? In rural districts, again, it is argued of farm lands that poor land is not improvable as rich land is, and that the shifting of the rating might put a punitive weight upon the acres of some owner whose sole offence was that he had not selected first-class soil. Such hard cases, indeed, might conceivably, though very rarely, occur.

The arguments in favour of rating ground values are too well known to need restating here. In the colonies they are reinforced by one or two local considerations. Speculative buying of land there has been exceedingly common. The rates in nearly all localities are light, or what would seem light in England. It is therefore possible to hold land year after year without building on it or making much profitable use of it. Usually this holding-on is deliberate, and is done in the hope of large ultimate gains. In the last twenty years it has often been the fate of some unlucky investor, unable to sell his land at anything like the price which he gave for it, to have to hold it year after year in the hope of avoiding a sale at a ruinous loss. Often large pieces of unimproved land are the property of absentees. Cases are known in which ex-colonists living in Great Britain have gone on holding colonial town or suburban sections for fifty years, doing little or nothing with them, and leaving them to be held in the same way by their children, who have never been colonists. These vacant lots are occasionally eyesores, and frequently inconveniences, diverting business and traffic and causing artificial crowding elsewhere. Like every other ill traceable to absenteeism, they are much grumbled at. Hardly any colonist but admits the fairness of putting

some special rate upon them; yet in most colonies they are not interfered with.

In New Zealand a law authorising the rating of land values was a part of the policy of the Government which imposed the progressive land tax of 1891, and a Bill to confer the power on local bodies easily passed the House of Representatives. The Upper House, however, offered a much more obstinate resistance to the rating Bill than to the land tax, and threw it out in three successive years—the last time by one vote only. Not until 1896 was it allowed to become law, and then only in the form of a permissive Act of the mildest possible kind. Until the year just mentioned rates in the colony had been levied on either the capital or annual value of real property. After 1896 the ratepayers in any local district were empowered to shift the incidence on to unimproved land values. But their freedom of choice was hedged about with various precautions. In the first place, the change was not to affect rates for water, gas, electric lighting, sewage, hospitals, or charitable aid. Next, it could only be made after a poll of ratepayers had been taken. The poll had to be demanded by a proportion of the local voters varying from twenty-five to fifteen per cent, according to the numbers enrolled. Finally, one-third of the ratepayers on the roll had to vote to make the poll valid, and a three-fifths majority was required to carry it. Until 1898, moreover, the ratepayers' franchise in New Zealand was narrow. Landlords rather than occupiers controlled municipal affairs. In 1898 the franchise was widened, and in 1899 an Act did away with the proviso requiring a three-fifths majority of the ratepayers in order to validate a change in the method of rating. A simple majority of those voting may now make the

alteration. At the time of writing this, one city (Wellington), a dozen boroughs, and about fifty smaller districts have availed themselves of their right to rate unimproved values, and no serious attempt has been made in any of them to revert to the old order of things. It is only right to mention that no rescinding proposal may be submitted to the ratepayers for three years after the adoption of the new method of rating.

Repurchase Laws[1]

The proverbial three courses are open to a people confronted with land monopoly and determined to break it up. They can confiscate land, as the French revolutionaries did; they can put pressure on the owners, by taxing or otherwise, to force them to sell out to private buyers; or the State can resume properties, in whole or part, at a fair price, taking the land either by arrangement or compulsorily. The first course is out of the question in a British colony. The second has been tried, as we have just seen, in three colonies, more or less half-heartedly, and with no very striking results so far. The third course has, therefore, been taken and is now

[1] Authorities.—The Parliamentary Papers and Debates on the Repurchase Laws are unusually full and interesting. The student should consult not only the papers printed under the titles of the Acts mentioned within, but the annual reports of the Departments of Lands and, in South Australia, of the Surveyor-General. In Victoria each separate purchase usually leads to a debate in Parliament, *e.g.* that on the purchase of the Eurack Estate, 1901. The chief debates in New Zealand were in the sessions 1891-1894, and mainly turned on the point of compulsory expropriation. In defence note the speeches of John M'Kenzie, *contra* Sir John Hall, Sir R. Stout, M. J. S. Mackenzie, W. Rolleston, W. Buchanan. The single-tax view is stated by Mr. P. J. O'Regan. The most important non-official account of Repurchase is found in Lloyd's *Newest England*. Mr. Lloyd was a witness of the balloting for the Waikakahi estate, one of the largest of the repurchased properties. His description is particularly well written.

being followed. In six colonies laws have been passed authorising the purchase of private lands for division into small holdings, and of four of these laws free use is being made. To anticipate a little, it may be said that the immediate results of these interesting experiments appear to be good in almost every way. How far, however, they provide a general remedy for land monopoly is quite another matter.

So recently has the State parted with the lands now held by private owners in Australia and New Zealand, that it is correct to call laws authorising Governments to buy such Land Repurchase Acts, and as such I shall speak of them. The colonies which have adopted statutes of the kind are New Zealand, Queensland, West Australia, South Australia, Victoria, and New South Wales. The first New Zealand law on the subject was passed in 1892; Queensland followed suit in 1894; West Australia in 1896; South Australia in 1897; Victoria in 1898; New South Wales in 1901.

In New Zealand, as I have already pointed out, the large holdings monopolised in 1891 an area utterly out of proportion to the size of the archipelago. What made this more irksome was the desolate, unimproved, uninhabited look of most of the great properties.[1] Few

[1] Constant reference to this most important feature of *latifundia* in the colonies are found in debates on the Land Question, *e.g.*—

In the immediate vicinity of A—— there is an estate of 40,000 acres, nearly the whole of which is of most magnificent quality, and only one or two families now live on it.—N.Z. *Hansard*, vol. lxxxiii. p. 655.

A few years ago I travelled from B—— to H——, and from the time I passed the A—— River till I reached the H——, I saw no settlement. I passed through some of the finest land in the colony, and met only a few sheep and millions of rabbits.—*Ibid.* vol. lxxxiv. p. 212.

We had last year 7000 odd acres, on which there was no human being living. At this time last year the property was leased to the New Zealand and Australian Land Company, and was held by them as one of their out-stations. The sheep were driven from that place once a year. They were shorn and driven back again, but no persons lived upon it. Now by the purchase and cutting up of that estate we have twenty-one settlers upon it.—*Ibid.* p. 344.

We have on the one side of L——, Mr. ——'s estate, of between 60,000 and

extensive holdings were being worked to anything like the best advantage. Most of them were heavily mortgaged; many were in the grip of the financiers, and were carried on from year to year with the least possible outlay of capital. It was a commonplace that half the great estates were for sale; and so they were, at a price. The mortgagees would not sell at a loss, and could seldom sell at a profit. They hung on to the land, watching one another and waiting for a rise in prices, and for a brisk demand which naturally did not come. Prices could not rise until a good proportion of the land was cut up and settled. The owners could not afford to cut it up until prices rose. There was a deadlock. What more than anything else exasperated the public was that many parts of New Zealand are, perhaps, as well suited for fairly close settlement as any spots in the world. Rainfall, soil, and proximity to seaports combine to mark out the more fertile tracts as the small man's country. And, whilst the country was just fitted for working farmers, and lying empty and waiting for their hands, men in hundreds and thousands, farmers' sons and country labourers, were growing up and working on other men's land, albeit they had the skill, knowledge, and strength to manage holdings of their own. The cry for land in New Zealand in 1890 was no mere urban sentimentalism. It was no mere factitious outcome of the preaching of theorists who imagined that by calling "Back to the Land!" loudly enough and long enough they could transplant superfluous men and women from the cities to the wilderness and keep them there. There was something of this, no doubt. But

70,000 acres, having on it a resident population of between sixteen and seventeen individuals. We have the —— estate, which employs very few people all the year round. On the other side we find the Land Company with how many acres I cannot say, but it runs from L—— to R——, a distance of 18 or 20 miles.—*Ibid.* p. 199.

in the main it was a genuine hunger for land, coming from the landless amongst a rural population. Distress in the towns strengthened it, and an exodus to Australia in the years 1886-91 pointed the moral. A colony, when population is deserting it, is like a child that shrinks instead of growing.

It fell to the Ballance Ministry, already mentioned, to meet the demand for lands for settlement. They were only too anxious to do so, and, within six months of taking office were agreed upon a threefold policy. First, the remaining Crown lands were to be rigidly conserved for genuine occupation under, if possible, true perpetual leases. Second, pressure in the shape of a progressive land tax was to be put on the large holdings. Third, land was to be repurchased for close settlement. The first of these three aims has not been reached; the second and third have.

Of course, State repurchase was no new idea in 1891. A timid little clause had crept into a Land Act in 1885, giving the Minister of Lands power to buy, by arrangement, small sections for village settlements. It was spoiled for use by a proviso that no bargains under it should be valid until they were ratified by Parliament. People will scarcely be anxious to sell bits of land, in New Zealand at any rate, if the transactions are to be hung up for months, and then shot at, before conclusion, by politicians and editors. Two years later Ballance, then busied with his scheme of village settlements, brought in a Bill to authorise him to buy land compulsorily for the purpose of settling landless men thereon in allotments of not more than one hundred acres. This, if carried, would have meant an important extension of village settlement. It was not carried, for the Progressives, though in office in 1887, were not in

power. Presently they were ejected, and there were three years of reaction in matters agrarian. Then in 1891 came the Ballance Ministry, and in it, as Minister of Lands, came the right man for the task, John M'Kenzie.

M'Kenzie is an instance of a statesman—he deserves the title—whose standing and influence within his colony were great out of all proportion to his reputation outside. Beyond New Zealand his name is little known. In the colony, from 1890 to 1900, the plain old farmer was the power behind the throne. He was no smooth-tongued demagogue. His broad Doric—the delight of the House of Representatives for many years—was now and again of the roughest. When engaged in knocking down foes he was none too careful to avoid treading on the toes of friends, and his foot was heavy. In essentials a loyal comrade, he was a dour adversary; there was a touch of barbaric pride in the frankness of his enmities; and he was slow to forgive, though he could forgive. No arts helped him to rise; no tinsel was ever stitched on to his homespun; he would tell any set of men—even newspaper editors—what he thought of them, and had a gruff scorn of self-advertisement. The extraordinary influence he wielded in his last years was due to courage and force of character, to intense earnestness, and to hard work capably done. Moreover, certain limitations, which on the surface seemed disadvantages, were—when once his strength had been proved—the secret of half his success. A white-handed, black-coated townsman, a man suspected of culture or fastidiousness, could never have appealed to the bush farmers, the "cockatoos" of the plains, and the graziers of the valleys, with any hope of rivalling this rugged Highlander, who was a farmer's son and had been a squatter's shepherd.

Not that M'Kenzie was illiterate—he was rather fond of reading, especially in his own tongue, the Gaelic—but there was a ring in his voice, a savour in his talk, that at once brought him into touch with the working country settlers. Here was a farmer who shared their struggles, spoke their speech, knew their burdens and difficulties, and respected their prejudices. His strength was acknowledged in town as well as country. Though he stood between the Progressives and the unearned increment, though he checked his party in their campaign against the freehold tenure, though in the labour crisis of 1890 he gave trade unionists a piece of his mind, the masterful Minister was very little harassed by the democrats of the extreme sort.

On his way up the ladder, to the level of substantial farmer, M'Kenzie had learned the business of politics in the school that is the best for men of some breadth of mind, while it is the very worst for the small-souled provincial person. I mean the school of local government. Through road board, education board, provincial council, county council, he served in one workroom after another of the Government factory. Always with his eye on the land question, he was to be found fighting against monopoly. In Parliament, when he got there, he graduated through a course of uphill opposition, and through a term of service as the Whip of an uneasy Government resting on a jerry-built coalition. So, when he came to be a Minister, he was armed at all points. No country gentleman could twit him with being an unpractical theorist; no city individualist had the slightest chance in a bout with him over the details of land administration. His successes in debate were not unbroken, for when provoked—and at times he was deliberately

badgered—his temper would explode in a rather appalling fashion; and then, as the tones of his Keltic voice grew high-pitched, he would—if I may employ the figure—hurl himself at his tormentors in short rushes as of a baited bull. Even then, however, the House was very tolerant of "John" and his explosions. And this was not merely because he was a good fellow when off the stage, well liked by all who had stood shoulder to shoulder or glass to glass with him. His hearers knew the difference between bluster and the outburst of an over-wrought, sorely-tried temperament. When at his best, and on his own subject, M'Kenzie—hot, fearless, full of his case—was a notable fighter. Most men, after attacking him once, thought twice before attacking him again. There were speeches of his which were veritable trumpet-calls to rally his party in moments of doubt or disaffection; and speeches which were charges upon the enemy's ranks, rousing enough to make the half-laughing, half-enthusiastic listeners think of the fire with which clansmen, claymore in hand, swept down on the redcoats at Killiecrankie and Prestonpans. And on the platform, when speaking for the reform for which he was literally giving his life, there were moments when this shepherd from the hills, passionately direct and lifted up by the greatness of his theme, could carry any audience away. Then you saw why he was a leader of men; then, watching him, you understood that in that gigantic body, and behind those grim and homely features, there was struggling for utterance a share of the unquenchable idealism, stormy sympathies, and vague poetry of the Gael.

Contrary to common belief, he was—except during fits of irritation—an astute and wary tactician, cool in council, and with an interest in finance and education

as well as in his own departments. It pleased many newspaper writers between 1890 and 1896 to credit him with morose suspiciousness and mulish obstinacy. In truth he was only too ready to consider suggestions from those whom he trusted. If he was a little over-suspicious of foes of the better sort, he had ample cause to beware of pitfalls. The path of agrarian law-makers in all colonies is set with traps to catch the unwary. Then, if his temper was unequal, his heart was in his work. Too earnest to avoid worry, too proud to shrug his shoulders at insult, a farmer, not meant for desk-work and life indoors, he felt attacks and took public life hardly. So his health gave way and he died before his time. But he had held office for ten years, had been a ruler as well as an official, had breathed life into the department of lands, and built up that of agriculture. His land tenure and repurchase Acts have yet to stand the test of time. In his hands, at any rate, they were good laws. Thousands of New Zealand homes are of his planting. It was not for nothing that, when a youth, he had seen evictions, and had beheld Highland peasants, hunted from the soil, encamping for the night among the gravestones of a churchyard, their only refuge. First and last, year in, year out, the strong Minister laboured for genuine settlement; from that nothing ever turned him aside; and so the rough, indomitable man did work that will not soon pass away.

Mr. M'Kenzie brought in his first repurchase Bill in 1891. For three years his attempts were thwarted by the Legislative Council. In the second year, indeed, they let him pass a repurchase law, but without any compulsory clause. It was therefore almost useless. Nearly a million acres were offered, under it, to the

Government in 1893. Much of this, however, was poor or unsuitable land, and the price asked for the rest was usually excessive. This was shown by the following table, laid before the House of Representatives in 1894, the figures of which did much to justify the demand for a compulsory Act :—

Provincial District.	Area.	Price asked.	Tax Value.	Difference.
	Acres.			
Auckland . .	43,772	£120,635	£46,765	£73,870
Hawke's Bay .	20,910	125,457	104,545	20,912
Wellington .	1,270	3,500	2,097	1,403
Marlborough .	13,006	50,125	41,245	8,880
Canterbury .	45,392	104,494	76,297	28,197
Otago . .	2,237	47,940	30,869	17,071
Southland . .	34,000	75,000	56,076	18,924
Totals . .	160,587	527,151	357,894	169,257

Furthermore, it may be noted that the chief property bought under the voluntary Act of 1892 was, and still is, the worst bargain that M'Kenzie made. This was the Pomahaka estate of 7000 acres, bought in 1893 for £3 : 10s. an acre. In 1901 half of it was lying on the Government's hands unlet. The purchase was bitterly criticised from the first, and was inquired into by a committee of the House of Representatives. Pomahaka became a byword throughout the colony, and it is said—I daresay with some truth—that settlers have been frightened away from it by the exaggerated accounts of its barrenness given in newspapers. When all is said, however, it remains that too much was paid for the property. Fortunately it stands almost alone in the story of the Land for Settlement Acts.

Speaking in 1893, M'Kenzie described one specimen

of the undesirable properties offered under the optional law :—

In the case of one property that was offered to me in Canterbury, the Government sent a valuator over it, who reported to me that the land was not worth anything for the purpose of settlement. The land was in a very good position, between two rivers, close to a railway, and I was told that it was of fair value. I had to go to the trouble of going around it myself to see whether the representations made were correct or not. The price asked was £4 an acre. I thought to myself, if the land was so cheap, surely it was land that would suit. It was between two rivers, accessible to the railway for people to get to it from every part, close to a river, and only £4 an acre. Surely it was worth the money. I went to see the land, and it was a bed of gravel! I would not give 10s. an acre to-morrow for it; and yet £4 was the price we were asked for it; and we were told that it was land suitable for the settlement of the people. Whenever any good land has been offered it has been offered at such a price that it has been found impossible to take it. I think that if you cannot dispose of land for settlement at 5 per cent on the price you gave for it, you had better let it alone.

While he was thus making trial, rather fruitlessly, of his voluntary law a strange thing happened. On the east coast of the South Island lay the freehold of Cheviot, one of the finest pastoral estates in the colony. Eighty-four thousand acres in extent, it was a compact block, about twelve miles square, spreading from a range of hills, the Lowry Peaks, to the sea-coast. Its northern and southern boundaries were broad rivers; between them lay hills, valleys, and flats—open, grassy, accessible; and on them grazed 80,000 sheep, while about eighty men, women, and children did duty for human society. It had been bought for ten shillings an acre under the cheap land system introduced by Sir George Grey and continued by the provincial Governments, and was a good type of the estates

created under free selection at low prices. It was a well-managed, wealth-producing property; its mansion-house was surrounded by gardens, orchards, and plantations; away from this centre it was almost void of human life. In 1892 Cheviot was assessed for land tax, and was valued at £305,000. The trustees, in whose hands it was, protested that its value was no more than £260,000, and called upon the Taxing Department either to reduce the valuation or to take over the property and pay £260,000. For in New Zealand at that time a landowner who thought his land over-assessed had the right to compel the State to take it at his own lower valuation. £260,000 is a considerable sum at any time. A sudden call for it was a large order in New Zealand in 1893, on the eve of the Australian bank-panic and two years of bad times. The Board of Reviewers, however, supported the Taxing Department. The decision then rested with the Cabinet. Ministers took their time, and had four separate valuations of Cheviot made: all were much above the trustees' estimate. Moreover, it was clear that if the Government capitulated and reduced the assessment, half the valuations of the large estates for the new progressive land tax would soon be challenged. They decided to buy Cheviot, and the transaction was concluded in April 1893. The assent which Ballance, as Premier, gave to it was almost his last public act, for he died ere the month was out. Before the year ended M'Kenzie was approached by a syndicate with an offer to the Government of £40,000 on its bargain. But M'Kenzie's blood was up. He was nettled at the failure of the voluntary repurchase law, and at the refusal of the Upper House to give him compulsory powers. Attacks upon himself, some of them coarse, had not tended to dispose him to

compromise. He knew that the land was wanted for settlement, and he determined to show that he could settle it successfully. Such a chance of giving the colony an object lesson could not be thrown away. He refused to relax his grip. Cheviot was roaded and cut up. The mansion-house and 5000 acres round it were resold to a member of the owner's family. A few thousand acres more were parted with for cash to reduce the prime cost. Seventy-five thousand acres were retained and leased, the better land in small farms under the lease for 999 years, the pastoral land in grazing runs. By July 1894 M'Kenzie could point to a population of 650. This has now grown to more than 1000. The land produces more than it did when in a single man's hands; and the rents bring in £5000 a year more than the interest charged on the outstanding purchase-money. It was the first attempt to break up a big estate and settle it on a rational plan. It has turned out, perhaps, the happiest and most profitable of such experiments.

The dramatic effect of the Cheviot purchase was felt throughout the colony. In the general elections of November 1893 most of the opponents of compulsory repurchase went down. M'Kenzie came back with a mandate which the Legislative Council respected, and before the end of 1894 his compulsory Act was on the statute-book, and he was empowered to spend a quarter of a million a year on buying land.

The process of amendment, usual with all experimental laws, was quickly applied to the "Land for Settlements Act, 1894." For the law upon the subject the student should now turn to the consolidating and amending Act of 1900. Under that he will find the Government is authorised to borrow and spend half a

million a year in repurchasing private lands. The money must not be borrowed at a higher rate of interest than 4 per cent.

Land may be bought either by friendly arrangement or by compulsion. In neither case can a purchase be made without the approval of the board of purchase commissioners. This is a body of five—four civil servants and a resident in the locality where the estate under consideration lies. One of the civil servants is the Land Purchase Inspector—an officer whose duty it is to inspect and report on all estates, whether offered to the Government or proposed to be taken compulsorily. He is the chairman of the board. Another member must be a commissioner of Crown lands.

The initiative rests with the Minister of Lands, who directs the inspector to examine lands and the board to negotiate for their purchase. Unless, however, the board, after inquiry, recommends the purchase in writing, nothing further can be done. Nor can the Government give more for the property than the board advises. On the other hand, it need not buy land because the board recommends that it should be acquired. Each purchase must be ratified by the Governor in Council, and in practice is also considered by ministers in Cabinet.

Land may be paid for with money, or with Government stock or debentures, or Crown land may be given in exchange for it. In all cases the seller has the right to be paid in money if he demands it. Coming to the clauses regulating compulsory acquisition, we find that, except in or near the four largest towns, no land may be taken by compulsion unless the property contains not less than

1000 acres of first-class land;

2000 acres of second-class land, *plus* 200 acres allowed for a homestead site; or

3000 acres of third-class land, *plus* 200 acres for a homestead site.

First-class land means land suited for agriculture; third-class land is purely pastoral, and second-class a mixture of the two. The areas above-mentioned are spoken of throughout the Act as the "prescribed maximum." When any estate is compulsorily taken the owner has the right to select and retain a block equal to the prescribed maximum. Where two or more farmers have, for at least two years, been owning land in copartnership, then, if the estate is taken, each of them has the same right of selection as if he had owned his share in severalty. Moreover, if the Government proposes to take a part of any estate, the owner or owners may demand that the whole shall be taken.

When no agreement can be come to as to area to be taken or price to be paid therefor, the whole matter in dispute goes before a Compensation Court of three persons. Two of these are nominated—one by each party. The third, the president, must be the Chief Justice of the colony or a puisne judge appointed by him. The Court's business is to declare

(*a*) What land (if any) the Minister is entitled or required to take.

(*b*) What land (if any) the owner is entitled to retain.

(*c*) What compensation is to be paid, and to whom.

(*d*) Whatever else may be needful to adjust all rights affected.

A noteworthy clause (23) states that in determining the compensation due the Court shall take into account only the value of the land and the loss, if any, to the

owner's business. No allowance is made for moral and intellectual damage.[1] Three weeks after the Court's order is made the Governor, by proclamation, may declare the land to be taken, and it there and then is vested in His Majesty. The owner may elect to retain possession of it for any time up to one year, but, if he does so, he must keep the property in good order and repair, and meanwhile the business of surveying and making roads for the purpose of subdivision may go on. The owner, in fact, becomes a Crown tenant, though without any liability to pay rent.

When, finally, the land is in the possession of the Lands Department they proceed to cut it up into allotments. None of these may exceed 640 acres in the case of first-class, or 2000 acres in the case of inferior land. In practice, the average size of the agricultural farms is much smaller than the maximum. Where more than one person applies to take up an allotment, a ballot is taken. A person may apply for more than one section, but if he gains one, his other applications are cancelled. Preference is given to landless applicants. Moreover, the district land board, in the hands of which all the arrangements for leasing the farms are left, has the power to examine all applicants as to their means to stock and cultivate land and their capacity to manage it. The boards may thus sift out the applicants; what is more, they do so. The land is held under the lease in perpetuity at an unchanging rental of 5 per cent on the prairie value as estimated at the time of letting. This capital value must be high enough to cover interest on the price of the land and all expenses incurred by

[1] At any rate this would seem to have been the intent of the clause, which was inserted in the law in the year 1900. The Compensation Courts, however, have continued to give a liberal definition of "value."

the Government in connection with it. No tenancy may be mortgaged or transferred without the land board's consent until after the first five years of the term.

A curious section (52) empowers the Commissioners of Crown Lands and the Receiver of Land Revenue to grant at their discretion to any tenant who is not in arrears a rebate of 10 per cent on any instalment of his rent, in order to encourage punctual payment. Rent may also be remitted in cases of "natural disaster." Where tenants take land with buildings thereon they have to buy the buildings by half-yearly payments extending over a term of years, and in the meantime pay interest at 5 per cent. Parts of the purchased estates may be reserved for public purposes. Pieces may be sold as sites "for churches, dairy factories, or creameries." A site for a creamery may be as large as five acres; a church's not more than one—a literal example of "God's Acre."

Apart from general precepts and declamation against "robbery and jobbery," the objections urged against the repurchase scheme when M'Kenzie was battling for it were chiefly these. First, it was pointed out, truly enough, that it would involve large loans and additions to the heavy public debt. To this the answer was—as far as there could be an answer—that the rents would more than cover the interest on the money borrowed. Next, it was suggested that, allowing repurchase to be good, still to spend a quarter of a million[1] a year on it was too much. The answer to this was that a quarter of a million was a maximum, not a fixed sum. The Act would virtually abolish freehold in the colony, said several speakers. "No," was the reply. "No small or

[1] The amount was subsequently doubled.

moderate-sized freehold can be touched; owners can reserve portions even of the large estates; and, in practice, the compulsory clauses will seldom be used." One section of the House complained that the measure would harass and destroy the large landholders. The spokesman of the single-taxers, however, saw in it a Bill for putting up huge sums into landlords' pockets, and for building up landlordism on a new basis, by making small estates out of large ones at a frightful cost to the people. Many of the Progressives openly or secretly fretted against the proposed tenure, the lease in perpetuity, without revaluations. M'Kenzie met this by showing that the ideal tenure, the perpetual lease with revaluations, had been three times affirmed by majorities of the Lower House, and that nothing had come of their action. The perpetual lease had been turned into a mockery by the insertion of a purchasing clause.

Some foretold that the State tenants would in a year or two cease to pay their rents; some thought the farms to be given would be too small; others, again, were emphatic that they would be too large, and complained that the scale of acquisition was too ambitious altogether. One or two Northern members protested against spending money on repurchasing expensive private lands when large tracts of Crown lands were still lying unsettled, and while the Maori tribes were still holding 7,000,000 acres, most of which they did not use. There was, however, force in the answer that, though a million and a quarter acres of public land were legally open for settlement, much of it was unattractive—poor clays and light soils in the North, dense forest covering broken ground in the West, hilly country fit only for grazing in the South, in Canterbury none at all. Reasonable objections

to flaws of detail—such as that no preference was to be granted to landless applicants, and no provision made for dealing fairly with expropriated partners—were met with amendments inserted either at once or in amending Acts.

On the whole, on a review of the debates and proceedings of the years from 1891 to 1898, M'Kenzie makes a good figure. He knew how to hold fast to essentials and yet meet criticism in a fairly rational spirit. By the time his compulsory Bill went on to the statute-book in 1894 it was a very different measure from the rather crude assertion of principle which had been introduced in 1893; and he made further improvement in later years. Most of the credit of improving the law belongs to him. He had a keen faculty for distinguishing between fair suggestions and wrecking amendments; he made many alterations voluntarily; and the broad result was that his Bill and amending Bills emerged from Parliament in a safe yet practicable form. The principle of compulsory resumption was asserted; the Minister was armed with ample powers; but the novel authority given him was accompanied with reassuring safeguards. It was no mere law for creating a few village settlements, or for parcelling out a piece here and there amongst peasant settlers or suburban workmen. What its policy was M'Kenzie stated frankly, and I will quote his words:

> We have to provide in this country for the settlement of the people on the land, not only in 5 acre or 10 acre allotments, but in allotments of whatever size the people require. The people should be encouraged to settle—not only small people, but those who will take up large areas—so that there will be employment for the small holders, and thus the one class will assist the other. Take the

Cheviot estate as an example. There we had power under a special Act to offer sections of from a quarter of an acre up to 3000 acres. If you take the Cheviot estate, there are 24,000 acres of good land, about an equal area of middling land, and the rest pastoral country; but would it have been fair to cut out the 24,000 acres of good land and leave the rest to the owner? The only way is to occupy some portions in large areas. The pastoral lessees there graze 58,000 sheep; they cannot be called poor men. They can employ their poor neighbours, who hold from 5 to 10 acres. You must encourage farmers' sons who have saved £3000 or £4000, and enable them to get land.[1]

M'Kenzie, be it remembered was, before all things, a farmer. He dreaded nothing more than the taking up of land by men whose sole qualification for farming was that they had failed in town life. Years before he had said:

You cannot possibly occupy land without some capital to work it. And there is another thing: a number of people go on land who know nothing about cultivating it, and the consequence is that, even if they have sufficient capital, they cannot succeed. It is absurd to think that anybody can be a farmer. It requires training in the same way as any other business. The most successful farmer is the man who has been brought up on a farm and who has got a proper training in that way.[2]

M'Kenzie held on to office for six years after the passing of the Repurchase Act of 1894, and pushed on the acquisition of land persistently. He did not make much direct use of the compulsory powers given him. Indeed, before his retirement in the winter of 1900, only two estates were taken in that way. Over one of these, Hatuma, in Hawkes' Bay, a notable conflict was waged. The Government offered £120,000 for it in October 1897. The owner, an absentee living in Scotland, was

[1] N.Z. *Hansard*, vol. lxxxiv. p. 233.
[2] *Ibid.* vol. liii. p. 145.

determined not to sell, and fought hard to keep it. The case was heard three times before the Compensation Court, and at length, in June 1900, Hatuma was awarded to the Government, though the Court made them pay £22,000 more for it than their original offer. It was the last of M'Kenzie's successes, for, utterly broken down, he gave up office and left the House of Representatives a few weeks afterwards, though he lived long enough to see settlers take up Hatuma. The 26,000 acres of the famous estate were divided into fifty-eight farms, and every one of them was snapped up on the day on which they were placed on the market. Two smaller estates were compulsorily taken in 1901. It is to be remarked that, in each of the four cases fought out before the Compensation Court, the resisting owners have been awarded much better terms than the Government had offered them. Of the purchases made by voluntary arrangement, the largest was that of the Waikakahi estate, 48,000 acres of good land in South Canterbury, for which £332,000 was paid, and which is now occupied by 153 holders.

The outcome of nine years of repurchasing land for settlement may be simply stated. At the end of March 1902, 107 estates, containing 448,349 acres, had been repurchased at a cost for the land of £2,117,352. In addition, £112,000 had been spent chiefly in road-making and surveys. The outlay, therefore, was nearly £2,230,000. On 387,000 acres of the area thus acquired, 2033 tenants had been placed. The rents paid in the year came to £91,000. The rental fixed on the lands which the Government had failed to let amounted in 1901 to a little less than £2000, of which Pomahaka was debited with one-third. What were the figures under

this head for the year ending with March 1902 I do not know, but the outlay in the year in interest was about £67,000, so that the profit on the twelve months was £23,000. The total revenue for the nine years was £303,000, and the surplus or profit at the end was £89,377. There was therefore a reasonable margin. The rent in arrear at the end of the year 1900-1901 was rather more than £8000, and was £1000 more than on the same day of the year before. Generally speaking, the selectors were contented, and were making headway and improving their farms.

As Cheviot was bought in a special way, it is not included in the returns under the Land for Settlement Act. Its condition is above the average of the other settlements. The rents paid during 1900 amounted to £14,166, and the arrears were less than £700. The amount earned by the property was equal to 5·7 per cent on the net cost, and the net cost had been reduced to £243,440. As £325,000 had been spent on the purchase of the property and on roads and surveys, the reduction was considerable. It was chiefly made by receipts from sales of land in the first two years after the purchase, but also, to some extent, by excess of rents over annual interest charges.[1]

From all accounts a satisfactory amount of caution is shown in selecting the land acquired for settlement. Between 350,000 and 450,000 acres are offered to the Government in the year. Less than a fourth is ultimately bought. Every acquisition is carefully scanned by numerous critics, every fault that can be found with it is promptly found, and every complaint that can be made is made, and made over and over again, until it is

[1] The rents received from Cheviot in 1901 came to £14,008; the outlay in the shape of interest was £8866; the arrears of rent £799.

finally threshed out in Parliament. Without asserting that the success of a costly experiment, barely eight years old, is yet beyond question, it may be safely said that the settlements—save two or three, and these not the largest—are bright and encouraging sights. It has been said that there is danger in the extraordinary power conferred in 1900 on Commissioners of Lands to grant rebates of rents. Such a power might be misused: I have yet to learn that any misuse of it has been proved.

For the most important Repurchase Act in Australia we have to turn to Queensland, and to the "Agricultural Lands Purchase Act of 1894." Here we have an example of a law contemplating only the milder methods of purchase by arrangement. With the owner's consent the Land Board of Queensland may make a contract for the acquisition of land by surrender—in other words, may buy it. Not more than £100,000 is to be spent in this way in any financial year. The seller of the land may take payment for it in debentures with a currency of twenty-five years, and bearing interest at the rate of 4 per cent or less. The land is divided into agricultural farms, and is by custom cut up into holdings of between 80 and 160 acres. The scheme is less ambitious, its spirit less polemical, than that of the New Zealand plan. Nor does the State endeavour to retain the fee-simple of the land repurchased. It sells the allotments to the occupant under a system of conditional purchase. To the price given for a repurchased estate, the cost of subdivision and roading is added, and a further addition of 10 per cent is made. The sum thus arrived at is the aggregate price to be charged to the selectors who take up an estate. Of course the value placed on each farm

allotted varies according to its quality and position. Each selector must pay 10 per cent of his purchase money in advance. He then need pay no more till the third year, when he begins paying annual instalments of 5 per cent paid for eighteen years, till in the twentieth year from the purchase the whole amount is discharged. With the 5 per cent of principal, interest must be paid on the balance of purchase money; so that the actual yearly payment is a shade under 8 per cent. A selector who has capital may shorten the process by paying over the whole price at such dates as may be agreed on with the Land Board. During the first five years of occupation the selector must live on the land and fence it, or, if it be fenced, make other improvements,—unless, indeed, he prefers to take up an allotment unconditionally. In that case he pays one-fourth more for the land, but does as he pleases about residence and improvement. Simultaneous applicants for any farm must ballot for it. No alien, no person under eighteen, no agent or trustee for another, may be an applicant. On the other hand, blocks of land may be set apart to be competed for by immigrants or newly-landed settlers.

Most of the repurchasing done in Queensland under the Act of 1894, and the amendment of 1897, has been in the Darling Downs, one of the most interesting and hopeful spots on the continent. Some scores of miles westward of Brisbane the traveller breasts the steep "break" of a rolling tableland extending over 6000 square miles. Most of the soil is black loam, and is stiff, tenacious, and deep, washed down, it would seem, from the hills that belt the plateau. Strips and clumps of timber are found on the park-like downs, but most of them are open and grassy. They lie happily placed

above the level of the relaxing littoral, and well to the eastward of the drought-plagued interior. Even in summer the nights there are fairly cool, and, one year with another, the rainfall is good. There are those who think that if the Darling Downs were subdivided they would carry as many people as are now to be found in all Queensland. Thanks to stupid laws in the past, and to rights of pre-emption given thereunder, they are not likely to do this yet awhile. Farm settlement, however, is making headway on the Downs, and the repurchase law is aiding the process, for of the 140,000 acres bought back under it in six years after 1894, the greater part lies there.

The results of repurchase in Queensland are summarised in a table attached to the budget, and in a return prepared by the Department of Lands in September 1900. When the return was made, fifteen properties had been bought from thirteen owners. The largest, Headington Hill, comprised over 36,000 acres; only one was less than 3500 acres; the total acreage acquired was 138,000 acres. The sum spent by the Government was £335,000, of which a little over one-third had been paid in debentures, and a little under two-thirds in cash. Much the most costly purchase had been Headington Hill, which had absorbed £81,000, all in cash. Interest, etc., on purchase money increased the total outlay by £34,000; and receipts, £73,000, left the net balance standing against the purchases £296,000. The price put on the land which had been resold up to date was £326,000; that on the area (7614 acres) lying unsold was £38,000. The payments due from selectors and in arrear only amounted to £4000. The number of leases issued was 452, of which 108 were unconditional. These figures relate to the period ending

with June 1900. There is very little later information to give. The continued drought caused a heavy deficit of revenue in the financial year 1900-1901, and the Treasury could afford no further repurchases. The net balance to debit of the account in June 1901 was £288,000. As compared with the cost of estates bought in New Zealand, the prices paid by the Government in Queensland seem low, and indicate the difference in the value of improved land in the two colonies. The highest price paid for a Queensland property was £3 : 13 : 5 an acre, and in only three cases was more than £2 : 15 : 6 given. The average price for repurchased land was rather less than half that which had to be given in New Zealand. There is no reason to suppose that the Queensland Land Board bought second-class land, or that the New Zealand Land Purchase Board gave too much for their bargains. The main cause of the difference in value is that English grasses flourish in the New Zealand climate.

The Agricultural Lands Purchase Act of Western Australia was enacted in 1896. The first purchases under it were completed in 1898. Land is acquired only with the owner's consent. The State resells the purchased areas conditionally, and the selector may pay up his purchase-money in twenty years. In order to acquire properties the Government borrows money at 4 per cent, usually from the Savings Bank; or it issues debentures at 3 per cent. At the end of 1900 five estates covering 45,568 acres had been bought for £51,513. Slightly over three-fourths of the land had been selected, and the report mentioned that after the close of the year a further "considerable area" had been taken up by settlers. The revenue for the year 1900 was £3923. Out of 172 selections only ten lapsed

through non-payment of rent, and most of the lapsed blocks were applied for by other settlers. So far as can be judged from the experience of its first three years' working, the Act seems likely to promote close agricultural settlement without ultimate loss to the tax-payers.

The Victorian law for the acquisition of land for the purpose of closer settlement is found in Part III. of the Land Act of 1898. It is altogether cautious and modest, and is just such a law as M'Kenzie in New Zealand was asked to content himself with, but refused to take. There is no compulsory clause in it, no authority to buy large semi-pastoral estates, no creation of State tenants in perpetuity, no power for the Minister of Lands and any board to conclude bargains without the assent of Parliament. All the law does is to authorise the Minister and the Board of Land and Works to conclude provisional agreements of purchase with the owner of good arable private land in any farming district. After that, no further step is to be taken until the contract is submitted to both Houses of Parliament. A copy of the provisional agreement is laid on the table of each. Along with the copy is laid a statement describing the property; giving its size and price; naming its owner; and defining the objects to which the land is to be devoted. Next, the Lower House has to declare by resolution that it is expedient to acquire the land; and, finally, a Bill ratifying the agreement has to be passed. The property is then taken over, made ready for subdivision, and parcelled out into farm allotments, none of which is to be so large as to be worth more than £1000. These are then disposed of under conditional lease—that is to say, they are sold by way of deferred

payment. No lease is to be granted to any person who already has £1000 worth of rural land, or who by virtue of the lease would come to hold more than £1000 worth. No lessee may hold more than one allotment. The lessee, or his wife, or a child of his over the age of eighteen, must live on the property for eight months during each of the first six years of the lease, and in that term must make improvements to the value of £1 an acre. At the end of six years he may, if he wishes, sublet or transfer his allotment, but only with the Land Board's consent. The purchase money of each allotment must be paid by the lessee in not fewer than sixty-three half-yearly instalments. Until the last of these is handed in, 4½ per cent interest is charged on the outstanding portion of the price. If the Government is unable to find occupants for any land offered under conditional lease, then, after two years, the land may be got rid of by public auction.

In spite of the hampering conditions stipulating for Parliament's approval of every purchase, the Victorian Government have been able to buy several estates of some extent. The largest purchase has been Wando Vale, 10,500 acres, costing £64,000. Nearly £45,000 was paid for the Walmer estate, of some 14,000 acres; and about £36,000 for the Whitfield estate, in which were 4246 acres. More than £29 an acre was paid for 90 acres near Melbourne, to be used as the sites of workmen's homes. At the end of July 1901, these four estates, containing 28,500 acres, had been acquired for £147,500. Roads and surveys had cost £4000 more. In October 1901 a fifth property, the Eurack estate, lying in the well-known Colac district, was bought for £54,000, and was subdivided in December into forty-

seven farms, all of which were taken up. Thus the four large estates have been taken up by selectors—three instantly, the other within a reasonable time. The 90 acres of suburban land obtained for workmen's homes have also been disposed of, in 56 allotments. Improvement has been going on briskly. Mr. Peacock, the Prime Minister, speaking in August 1901, was well satisfied with the outlook. Undoubtedly it promises well. More than that cannot yet be said. It can, however, be claimed that the Government has certainly not lacked in caution. The four estates first purchased were selected from one hundred and sixty-two properties offered.

The South Australian "Closer Settlements Act, 1897," has the virtue of brevity; it is contained in twelve sections, and only one of these is long. For the most part it is on the same lines as the Victorian law. It does not, however, require that every season's repurchase arrangements should be made the subject of an Act of Parliament. Its framers were content to require that full particulars of every repurchase should be laid before Parliament without delay. The price to be paid for any property is not to be more than 15 per cent higher than the land tax assessment of the unimproved value *plus* a fair estimate of the worth of any improvements. Then, when the repurchased land is subdivided, the farms are not to be sold as in Victoria and Queensland, but to be let on perpetual lease, at a rental of 4 per cent on the sum each farm has cost the State. The improvements existing on each allotment when leased are not included in the capital value on which the rent is assessed. They are valued separately, and the tenant must buy them, and pay for them within twenty-one years. As in the Victorian

law, the subdivision must be close, and the applicants for farms must own little or no land; the limit of £1000 appears in both Acts.

In three years and a half after the passing of the Act rather more than 39,000 acres were bought under it at a cost of £81,367. Virtually the whole land acquired was leased without difficulty to State tenants at an annual rental of £2916. The yearly sums paid in rent and towards purchasing improvement came to £3378 in the year ending in June 1901. The rental was equal to $4\frac{1}{8}$ per cent on the purchase money. Yet only 13,000 acres had been bought in the two years ending with June 1901. The official explanation was that nearly all the land offered was unsuitable, or that the price asked was much too high.

The Closer Settlements Act of New South Wales became law in December 1901. Mr. Crick, the member of Mr. Lee's ministry who introduced it, would fain have made it compulsory. But the Legislative Council cut out the compulsory powers, and the Government, thinking half a loaf better than no bread, accepted an optional Act. Under this a sum not to exceed £300,000 a year may be spent on repurchase. Land when bought is to be leased for ninety-nine years, on a rent subject to revision every twenty years. All income derived by the State from repurchased land is to be placed in a separate account, and any surplus after payment of interest and exchanges must go to form a sinking fund for extinguishing the cost of the purchase. The leased farms are, as far as is practicable, to be no larger than 640 acres. Larger areas may, however, be leased where the nature of the land makes a mixture of grazing with agriculture necessary. Applicants for leases must be qualified farmers, and must observe conditions as to

residence and improvement. A paper giving full details of all transactions under the Act must be laid on the table of each House of Parliament within the first thirty days of each session. The paper must contain in particular the report of the Land Board on each purchase.

Repurchase laws sensibly administered may promote a useful amount of genuine settlement. Clusters of farms and homesteads pleasant to look upon may in many spots succeed pastoral solitude. But when repurchase is spoken of, as it sometimes is, as a general remedy for land monopoly, it is as well to point out that the process has its limits, and that these are the stern limits of finance. The problem in the colonies differs from that presented by a populated country like Ireland, where the farmers are already on the land, and where the question involved is a change of tenure. In the colonies the object of State repurchase is gradually to meet a demand for land and to put settlers upon tracts now void of human life. The purpose is legitimate, but colonial credit is not a bottomless purse. As purchase after purchase is made, the public debt increases, and, though the rents collected from the repurchased acres may meet the interest on loans, the principal may loom large in the eyes of English or other creditors. Moreover, the more successful the process of settling the heretofore empty pastures is, the more certainly will it add to the price of the outstanding large estates. A reasonable estimate of the capital required to expropriate in this manner half the larger estate owners of the colonies makes the sum two hundred millions. Whether public opinion will face such an addition to the public debts is at least doubtful. The public may take the view that while repurchase in moderation and for immediate relief here and there is a good thing, some

other general method of dealing with monopoly will have to be applied in conjunction with it.[1]

[1] From time to time one sees statements in English and American newspapers that the Single-tax school are carrying things before them in the colonies. How far this is from truth the two foregoing chapters should have shown. And how far the Single-taxers themselves are from satisfaction with the land and fiscal policy even of New Zealand may be gathered from the following excerpts from a manifesto of the Single Tax League of that colony, published in about the middle of 1901 :—

SINGLE TAX LEAGUE

A MANIFESTO TO THE PEOPLE

The time has arrived when your attention should be directed to the importance of the allied questions of land and taxation as affecting this country. We admit that much good has been done, but we do not see that our legislation contains those principles which will save this colony from the social ills of older countries, from the impoverishment and degradation of the masses of toilers, and from that unrest and fear which, as is now universally admitted, springs from an iniquitous and unequal distribution of wealth, coupled with crushing indirect taxation, the latter falling almost wholly on the working classes. Already the symptoms of these evils have shown themselves among us. Even New Zealand has had its cycle periods of industrial and commercial depression, necessitating relief works and the distribution of food and clothing.

We admit that in this country commendable efforts have been made, and are being made, by the authorities to avert these evils by legislation, but the question arises whether this legislation is a real remedy? Does it by its incidence enable the producer to retain all of that which rightfully belongs to him? Does it break down land monopoly—that growth, which, with material progress, claims an ever-increasing proportion of the products of labour, and a consequent reduction of the labourer's share? Does it reduce taxation on the masses? Decidedly not!

Legislation may be so devised as to have merely the appearance of a reform without the reality. It may seem to overturn the old system, and yet foster all its abuses in a new and subtle form, less apparent, and therefore more dangerous. We are of opinion that the so-called land policy now obtaining in New Zealand, instead of being a remedy, perpetuates everything vicious in the old system, and at the same time places the lands of the colony beyond the control of the people.

. . . . . .

It is true that the purchase of a "big estate" will settle some people on the land. It does not, however, abolish the landlord; it only changes him, and in such a way that he is not readily found or seen. Not only is the past unearned increment being placed beyond the reach of the people for ever, unless taxation is resorted to, but the future unearned increment, notwithstanding that the colony pays heavily for the land, is again being alienated. Ethically, a lease of this description is inexplicable, and we dispute the right of the people of any time to will away the land from future generations.

When a purchase turns out badly the land is left on the hands of the Government, but when the purchase results in a profit to the tenant, which, it must be admitted, appears to be frequently the case, he retains the unearned increment during his occupancy, and when he is ready to sell or transfer he rack-rents his successor; that is, the successor pays the stipulated rent to the Crown as first agreed on, as well as a further rent or purchase price to the first lessee. After such land has changed hands several times, it is not difficult to imagine what will be the position of the occupier, whose original rent will in many cases be a mere peppercorn compared with that which he will have to pay to the heirs and executors of his predecessors. The continuation of this system of purchase and re-sale means not only aggravating, but also perpetuating the evils which it is supposed to alleviate.

. . . . . .

The land for settlement policy shows that there is a demand for reform, and

Village Settlements [1]

"Why don't they go to the land?" is the question asked by every European who hears that, in Australia and New Zealand, there are at times unemployed men clamouring for work. Colonists who know what "going

whilst regarding it to that extent as a step in the right direction, this League holds that all unearned increment should be secured to the community, to whose presence and industry that value is due. It is proposed to assess it by means of a tax on unimproved land value, such tax to be gradually increased, at the same time remitting other taxes which fall at present on labour and capital, beginning with the remission of taxes on the necessaries of life, until all taxes are levied on unimproved land values only—hence the name "Single Tax."

The present annual unimproved value of land in New Zealand is about £4,000,000, so that the yield would be beyond our requirements.

The justness of such a tax is not only admitted in theory, but is recognised in our legislation, and endorsed by the people who have voluntarily adopted this method of local taxation in almost every district where it has been proposed. We have also for State revenue purposes a tax on the unimproved value of land, and although it is not so perfect in its form as that in use by local bodies, it has, nevertheless, met with general approval, and it is believed that its adoption ten years ago was the principal cause of the comparative prosperity which has continued since that time.

. . . . .

It will be seen that our proposal to tax land values has passed from the theoretical stage into practical politics. But in order to obtain the full benefit of the system, the principle must be carried to such an extent that mere holding of land without using it will become impossible.

If this were done there would be plenty of land available for settlement without paying exorbitant prices to speculators and others. The present system of purchase tends to sustain land values at a fictitious level. Our proposal would cheapen land and lighten the burdens of the community generally.

The cry of "land for the people" is now all but universal. In the Commonwealth of Australia the question commanding perhaps the greatest attention at present is that the territory of the Federal City should be retained by and for the Commonwealth—that it should not be alienated. In view of this New Zealand should not lag behind.

[1] Authorities.—**South Australia**—Crown Lands Act, 1885; Crown Lands Amendment Act, 1890, and Regulations; "The Homestead Block System in South Australia," by E. Wilson, P.P., 1894; "Reports of Inspector of Homestead Blocks," S.A., P.P.; Crown Lands Law Amendment Act, 1893, Part vii., and Regulations made thereunder; Blockholders' Loans Act, 1891; Report of Select Committee on Village Settlements, 1895; Annual Reports of the Surveyor-General; Report of Commissioner of Audit, 1901, pp. xxxi., xxxii.

New Zealand—Land Act, 1885, sections 165-168, superseded by Land Act, 1892, sections 169-172, and Regulations; Annual Reports of Department of Lands under heads of Village Settlements and Improved Farm Settlements; "Report on N.Z. Village Settlement," by Hon. W. Copley, N.Z., P.P., 1891.

Victoria—The Settlement on Lands Act, 1893; and Annual Reports of Proceedings taken under its provisions.

N.S. Wales—The Labour Settlements Act, 1893, and Amendment Act, 1894.

Queensland—Reports of Department of Lands for 1895 and 1896, Part viii.; Return of Proceedings under Co-operative Communities Land Settlement Acts,

to the land" means in the case of townsmen do not ask the question quite so quickly. Still, they do recognise that the divorce of man from the soil, unnatural everywhere, is monstrous in young countries. They are sceptical of schemes for turning artizans into peasant farmers, wholesale and in a few months; for they have seen too many philanthropic fiascoes to be sanguine. But a plot of land, though a bad crutch, may be a good staff for a working man. It may not enable him to be independent of wage labour, but it may help him to tide over bad times and dull seasons, and over the slack months that are encountered in most years. Handicraftsmen living on allotments near cities or country towns may practise their trades and yet not neglect their land, and their families may help them in garden and orchard. This applies with much more force to shearers, harvesters, and other country labourers, whose employment is chronically intermittent. In every year these are as busy as they can be for a few months, and have little or nothing to do during other months. In the early days the typical shearer, farm hand, or "rouse-about" was a homeless vagabond who spent his wages once a year in a wild orgie, and then—turned out of doors by the publican into whose pocket his money had gone—shouldered his swag and walked through dry places, tramping from station to station, asking for work. That this dreary life is no longer that of most country labourers is mainly due to the gradual spread

1893-1894; also working of self-government by Co-operative Groups, P.P., 1895.

"Village Settlements in Australia" (memorandum by Minister of Labour), N.Z., P.P., 1895; also "Report on Village Settlements in New South Wales, Victoria, and South Australia," by J. E. March, N.Z., P.P., 1895; *Life and Progress in Australasia*, by Michael Davitt, Part iii., London, 1897; *Le Socialisme sans Doctrines*, by A. Métin; *Les Nouvelles Sociétés Anglo-Saxonnes*, by Pierre Leroy-Beaulieu; *Newest England*, by H. Demarest Lloyd.

of closer settlement. To some small extent the change has been helped on by the village settlements described in this chapter. They are the creations of the last sixteen years, and differ from other forms of settlement chiefly in this, that they aim at placing labourers on the land who shall still remain labourers, at least in part. Village settlers are not, as a rule, expected to win their livelihood altogether from their patches of soil. The noted co-operative villages on the river Murray, which were exceptions, were scarcely encouraging exceptions. The average village settler is at times a wage-earner, and in that differs from peasant farmers. Another feature of the village system is that many of the allotment holders have had small Government loans to help them when going on the land. Others, in the earlier months or years of their settlement, have been aided by employment on road-making or other public works in their neighbourhood. Most of them are still tenants of the State, or clients of the Treasury, or both. In certain settlements experiments in co-operation have been tried, never with much success. In other cases, where unemployed in dire poverty and want have had to be dealt with, benevolent private persons have taken a share in managing them, nearly always with disappointing results. Though, however, amateur direction and co-operation have not borne good fruit, and though the proportion of failure in villages everywhere has been large, the men, women, and children now found in them number something like thirty thousand, and in South Australia, New Zealand, and Victoria the results, though mixed, are, viewed broadly, cheering. New South Wales, on the other hand, has not done much more than exhibit one melancholy lesson of warning. Queensland shows an abortive Act of Parliament and

some deserted villages, and West Australia and Tasmania nothing at all.

Village settlement began in South Australia in 1886, and therefore at the same time as in New Zealand. It went, however, under another name. The settlements were called homestead blocks, and the settlers blockholders, or simply blockers. The blocks were of three classes. First, there were allotments round Adelaide—the one large town of the colony—to be homes for artizans whose time is chiefly or partly given to their trade. Second, there were holdings occupied in the country by farm labourers employed by neighbouring landowners. Third, homes for the families of nomadic labourers, such as shearers, drovers, harvesters, whose work takes them away from their domicile for weeks or months at a time. At the inception, a serious mistake was deliberately or carelessly made. The first blockholders were placed on poor land. Yet enough success followed to stimulate Mr. Cotton (the father of the scheme), Cockburn, and others, to push it on. Its advocates had meant that the blocks should be let under perpetual lease. Against their wish the tenure was allowed to be freehold, to be acquired on conditions. By 1891 there were about 2000 villagers, nearly all holding their land as conditional purchasers. In that year the Blockholders Loan Act was passed, authorising small advances of not more than £50 each to be made to help the blockers in building dwelling-houses. Afterwards the law was amended so as to permit loans to be granted to aid the men to make other substantial improvements. The term of each loan was to be nine years, and the interest thereon 5 per cent. In 1895 the number of blockers had grown to 3337, and they with their families made a population of 10,000. They

were occupying 46,000 acres, an average of 13½ acres each. Tenure by perpetual lease was beginning to come into favour. In 1893 a law was passed authorising the repurchase of land for homestead blocks, and this was made use of without delay. In eighteen months 33,000 acres were bought at a cost of £17,000, and though this pace was not maintained, the repurchased area had increased in 1898 to 4550 acres, costing £28,000. Living on it then were seventeen hundred souls, whose orchards and improvements were valued at £37,000.

Near Adelaide the allotments are usually small—say about five acres. Land is costly there. To prevent the blockers mortgaging their plots in order to obtain the freehold, an Act has been passed preventing the sale of the fee-simple of homestead blocks within twelve miles of Adelaide. Many of these suburban allotments are pleasant sights. Substantial cottages stand in large vegetable gardens and orchards. When trade is slack the blockholder has his garden to fall back upon; when he is busy at his trade his wife and children share in the home work. Sometimes an elderly relative is found living with the family and putting his hand to the watering and other garden work. Of the rural settlements, some of the most interesting are found in the Adelaide hills. There, though the hillside slopes are often poor, there is rich soil in the valley bottoms, and with a strip of that the blockers of the hill country, helped by a good rainfall, manage to do far from badly. They grow fruit, flowers, and vegetables for Adelaide; and own cows, pigs, and poultry. Many of their cottages are pictures of comfort.

The progress of the homestead blocks during the years before 1895 was encouraging. In that year, unhappily, began a succession of bad seasons. Droughts

are no respecters of land systems, and the withering breath of hot winds parched blockers' settlements and squatters' runs impartially for five disastrous years. Not all the blocks suffered, but in the more unlucky districts the inspectors saw melancholy sights. Acres of vines and hundreds of fruit trees had perished; the trees still living were wilted and without strength enough to ripen such fruit as had set. Frosts, rabbits, and locusts added to the mischief. Whole groups of blocks were blighted and the blockers ruined.[1] In one group, orchards and gardens worth more than £10,000 in 1898 were valued at less than £3000 in 1900. In another set of holdings the value of the orchards fell from £12,500 to £4900. Thus the progress of the blockholders was arrested, and some threw up their allotments. During the six years between June 1894 and June 1900 their numbers almost stood still. Yet the Inspector could claim that "although their working horses and milch cows died for want of feed, their trees and vines perished before their eyes, and their vegetables withered in the garden for want of water, they did not sit down in despair." The best proof of this is found in the figures of the report on the homestead blocks for the

[1] Report of Inspector of Homestead Blocks, August 1900. The report thus goes on:—

One blockholder, a widow, could two or three years before have sold out with £600 to the good. When I was there, she was leaving the block, practically penniless, and had to go into the port to get her livelihood by laundry work, etc. In scores of other cases, where the health and comfort and pleasure of the children especially had been increased by the possession of a few vines and fruit trees, these had been destroyed, and the loss was most keenly felt.

In this scene of desolation at Port Augusta, where almost every tree and vine had perished, one block had escaped the general wreck. The locusts had been beaten off, the place was wire-netted, and hundreds of rabbits captured every week. These were skinned and the skins sold, and the carcasses dried to be fed later on to pigs. A good supply of water was available and freely used, and vines were bearing good crops of ripe fruit, which was being sold at good prices. Another case was at Port Germein, where a blocker occupied an angle between two roads, and had about ten acres planted with vines. The Baroota water was laid on. Strange to say, the locusts, which had cleared off everything on the adjoining blocks, had passed by his, and his vines were loaded with grapes, which he was selling at 8s. a case.

year 1900, and of the Report of the Commissioner of Audit for the year 1900-1901. The number of blockholders in the former year was 3238, of whom three-fourths were holding under conditional purchase tenure and the remainder under perpetual lease. In addition, 310 had completed the purchase of their land, and had passed out of the scope of official control. Altogether, 10,000 persons were residing on the blocks, and in the face of the droughts their improvements were estimated to be worth £280,000. The rents received from the beginning amounted to £31,500. The rent and interest in arrear came to £2750 only. By June 1901, £32,000 had been lent them by the State, and £12,000 repaid. They had paid a little less than £5000 in interest on the loans. Most landlords would regard this as a satisfactory balance-sheet in the case of a body of tenants, all poor, who had been plagued with five years of drought. The weak spot on the blocks system was not that the leaseholders had failed to improve their land or make a brave fight with fortune. It was that though the scheme had been begun for the special purpose of providing homesteads for work-people, yet in 1900 hardly two-thirds of the blockers were living on their allotments.

Until 1893 what I have, using the New Zealand name, called village settlement went on in South Australia successfully enough, but without developing startling features. Nothing in the nature of communism, or even of co-operation, was tried. Each group of villagers was made up of separate allotment-holders, who, apart from neighbourly kindness and intercourse, had nothing to do with each other. They might exchange small services, and often did; that was all. In 1893, however, South Australia decided to try an experiment of a kind so peculiar as at once to attract

attention from humanitarians and economists. For it was on a considerable scale, and was nothing less than an attempt to carry out a body of the unemployed, with their women and children, into the wilderness and plant them there in co-operative associations. The object was as reasonable as the attempt was bold. In 1893 South Australia was depressed, as were other colonies. Labour went begging, and there was the inevitable outcome—distress, threats, and recriminations. And, all the while, along the river Murray, where it flows westward after leaving Victoria behind, there was unused land in quantity, sandy loam which would grow anything if irrigated, and even something if left to the mercy of the Australian clouds. When, therefore, the Kingston-Cockburn Government resolved to transport the unemployed to the Murray scrubs, band them in co-operative societies and settle them along the river's banks, the project was welcomed with something like enthusiasm. The workless were formed into "village settlement associations"—bodies corporate with a common seal and the right to sue and be sued. Under an Act passed in December 1893, the Government was empowered to grant perpetual leases of land to these bodies, in the proportion of not more than 160 acres for each member, and lend them money up to £50 each. It was hoped that co-operative ownership and labour would enable the settlers to live more cheaply, and to undertake the work of providing that prime and common necessity—water for irrigation.

Thirteen of these associations were formed, and eleven of them were planted along the Murray's banks,[1] where 64,000 acres were assigned to them. The workless welcomed the prospect of co-operation in the wilder-

[1] The other two were short-lived.

ness, and 450 males enrolled themselves as villagers. Kindly sympathisers interested in the project formed a society to aid in equipping them for their venture. Sheep (of which one squatter gave a thousand), cows, and some horses, together with seed-wheat, harness, and tools, were provided by these friends. The settlers, who were put on the land in the first months of 1894, went to work with a will. When, only a little more than a year afterwards, an officer from the Land Department of New Zealand, despatched to report on the strange experiment, saw them busy at building, gardening, and irrigating, he was impressed with their energy and surprised at the progress they had made. Many of them were townsmen, yet in fifteen months they had cleared 4000 acres, had cut down and grubbed up timber, had erected pumping machinery to raise water from the river, had built flumes, dug irrigating ditches large and small, and planted two-fifths of their cleared land with wheat, vines, or fruit trees. Communal blacksmiths, wheelwrights, bootmakers, and bakers were at work in their shops. Sawmills were noisy; bricks were being made; limekilns and drying-kilns had been put up; schools had been built, and substantial cottages were taking the place of the rough huts which had sheltered the settlers in the first months after their coming. The eleven villages held seventeen hundred souls; and perhaps their most encouraging feature was to be found in the throngs of healthy children, rescued—some of them at least—from the barrenness of street life, and growing up where food, schooling, fresh air, and free space could be had in plenty. The management of each settlement was in the hands of trustees elected by the settlers. The decisions of these governors could be set aside and the men themselves removed by a vote

of two-thirds of the villagers. In all more important questions the trustees consulted a public meeting of villagers. Both settlers and trustees were subject to the overriding power of the Minister of Lands, who, as landlord and mortgagee, retained final control, and whose inspector visited the settlements monthly. Rations of food were served out weekly. To each member was also given a small daily coupon, usually for 6d., which might be exchanged for goods at the communal stores, or saved and put to the bearer's credit. As a rule, families managed to live on the equivalent of from ten to fifteen shillings a week, and single men on about a shilling a day.

There were swarms of wild rabbits in the Murray valley, and though this nuisance made rabbit-proof fences round crops and gardens needful, the rabbits could be shot or snared for food. Fish were plentiful in the water—the Murray cod are good eating—and the river was the habitat of ducks and other wildfowl. Toilsome as it was to clear away the timber, some of it at least could be sold as firewood to the steamers which, laden with wool or stores, plied up and down the river. And a certain amount, though not a great deal, of work for wages could be had by villagers who cared to hire themselves out to the neighbouring squatters, or to the fruit-farmers of Renmark. Dry as the climate was, it was healthy, and, except in mid-summer, not unpleasant. The Government began by advancing money in instalments to the extent of £50 a settler, and, when this was not found sufficient, it was raised to £100. The payment of rent and interest was to have begun three years after the founding of the villages; the three years of grace were expanded to five.

The co-operators lacked neither zeal nor industry.

In three years the improvements on eight of their settlements were valued at £42,000. In October 1895, twenty months after starting, they had 1604 acres under tillage. In June 1897 the cultivation on the surviving settlements covered 4829 acres, and a year later 6585. At the end of April 1899 they had paid the Government £5254, but the Government's total outlay on their settlements had mounted to £80,000. In 1895 the men in the eleven settlements numbered 381; four years later three of the villages had been broken up, and the muster-roll of the remainder showed 182. The population of all ages had fallen from 1679 to 775. Next year it went down further to 685. In June 1901 the South Australian Commission of Audit stated the financial position of the thirteen settlements. Six of them had been abandoned by the villagers, and against these were to be set Government advances amounting to nearly £20,000. The improvements on the land were assets of £6230 in value. The six were let on perpetual lease at a total rental of £365 a year. Seven settlements—Holder, Lyrup, Waikerie, Kingston, Pyap, Moorook, and Ramco—were still in being, but were subdivided among the settlers. The report of the Inspector in 1892 thus bids farewell to the original scheme:—

> Considering the bad season last year, I think the condition of the village settlements is very fair, and there is a prospect of all seven of them proving a success owing to the improved condition of affairs under the new Act. The old communal system proved a failure, but the new system of cutting the settlements into blocks and giving each man an individual holding has already been shown to be more beneficial. Although the blocks have only been surveyed a year, about half the area is already planted. In five or six years the settlers will be firmly established, and will need no assistance.

The loans made to the seven came to a total sum of £94,549. Of this about £13,000 had been repaid, leaving the net debt £81,569. The most hopeful sign was that more than a fourth of the money repaid was credited to the year 1900-1901.

This failure—and so far as co-operation is concerned it is a failure—may to some extent be accounted for by want of capital and experience of country life. The co-operators were heavily handicapped. Nearly all were townsfolk. Many of them began with nothing but a few tools and utensils, and a little food and clothing. Those of the village of New Residence, who had got together £5 a-piece to make their start with, were looked upon as capitalists. As a whole, the villagers underwent the depressing experience of settlers who had to work hard, live sparely, yet see their debt mount up year after year. The wages they were able to earn at work outside their communities were not enough to tide them over their first years. Experience in almost every colony where village settlement has been tried shows how much depends upon the amount of wage labour the villagers can count on. In the wilderness of the lower Murray this was small. Then it is but fair to point out that the same succession of dry seasons overtook the villagers as befell the blockholders. The Murray settlers were able to irrigate, but that, though it saved their orchards and gardens, did not help their cereals. It has been suggested that the South Australian Government grew impatient with the co-operators too soon; and it is perhaps true that the supervision after the first three years was not as sympathetic as it might have been.

But, when all is said, it remains that co-operation is a delicate and complicated machine, ill fitted to endure severe strain and rough exposure. The friction amongst

the Murray villagers was intolerable. They wrangled amongst themselves in a fashion which wore out the patience of sympathisers. They quarrelled with each other; they quarrelled with the Minister of Lands. They quarrelled over the respective shares and doles to be given to married men and to bachelors; over the size of their house-plots; the quality of their buildings; the amount of interference they would tolerate from the Government, especially in the sale of their produce; the amount of confidence they ought to put in their own elected trustees and administrators. If co-operation has died out in the Murray settlements, it is not because the villagers were lazy, or because they did not live on little and produce wealth rapidly. Every account of them which I have read testifies to their industry. Co-operation showed its value as an agent in production; but amongst the class from which the villagers were drawn, co-operative farming is as yet a counsel of perfection. If further proof were needed, it might be found in the story of the attempt made in Queensland to found twelve co-operative agricultural communities under an Act passed in 1893. There the land chosen was for the most part unsuitable; neither the project nor the settlers had the elements of success in them, and their failure was rapid and complete. Another and better known failure was that of the co-operative village established in 1893 at Pitt Town in New South Wales as a receptacle for a number of the unemployed of Sydney. If I do not relate it here, it is because I do not think that on the whole co-operation was given a fair chance there. Ninety-two settlers with women and children were plumped down on 2000 acres of dry, medium-to-bad land in a neighbourhood where the settlers were chiefly a poor, struggling sort of

people, unable to employ much labour. When I saw Pitt Town in November 1894, the mistakes made in selecting and supervising it appeared too obvious to leave much room for hope about its fate, unless a complete change were made at once. As in Queensland, the experiment there was tried in such fashion as hardly to furnish fair evidence against co-operative settlement. As far as it may be accounted evidence it is deeply discouraging. In 1896 the co-operative settlement was broken up, and it was decided to turn the place into a State-labour farm somewhat on the lines of the farm at Leongatha described in the chapter on the Unemployed. In 1901 Pitt Town was providing work and shelter for fifty old men, placed there by the commissioners who have charge of the Labour Bureau of New South Wales. Two small villages only are now found in New South Wales, at Bega and Wilberforce. In both the land is held in severalty.

The present village settlements of New Zealand date from May 1886. They were not, strictly speaking, the first of their kind. A generation ago, Messrs. Rolleston and Kennaway, then administering the province of Canterbury, had tried, and with success, to put immigrant labourers on small allotments. Their experiment, though it answered, was on a small scale, and little trace of their villages is now left. It was reserved for Ballance, when Minister of Lands in 1886, to make a fresh departure. Pressed by the numbers and distress of the unemployed in the bad years of 1885 and 1886, he did his best to place a number of them, with their families, on the soil. Small blocks of Crown land were cut up into plots of from 20 to 50 acres, and parties of from half a dozen to thirty settlers, accord-

ing to the size of the block, were sent out to occupy them. The land was not sold to them, for they had no money. Nor was it given to them, for that would have ended in many of them selling it as soon as it was saleable. So the allotments were leased to them on perpetual lease at a rental of 5 per cent on the unimproved value. The value was usually £1 an acre. Money up to £70 might be advanced to each settler to enable him to clear and sow his land and build a house thereon. The scheme had been well thought out, and had many merits. Unluckily Ballance, though a farmer's son, was not himself a farmer, but a journalist. He had to leave the selection of sites for his settlements to others, and some of these, notably in the Auckland district, were very badly chosen. The sites were too remote, or the soil was poor. If there is one thing proved to be more certain than another in the history of land settlement, it is that poor men placed upon poor land will fail; and several of the Auckland village settlements have been failures. Elsewhere they have, in the main, succeeded, and so well that one can but regret that there are not more of them. About 2200 selectors settled in Ballance's villages. The number holding selections in 1901 was 2011. Only a little more than half of these were original selectors. After fifteen years 50 per cent of the original villagers were gone. Death or accident had removed some; many, however, had given up the struggle. Though their places had been taken by others, the new-comers did not always occupy the selections under the same tenure. About one-third of the villagers now hold their plots under other tenures. The system has had difficulties to cope with. Ballance went out of office in September 1887, and his successor

did not encourage village settlements. Selectors were permitted to buy the fee-simple of allotments, and about 20,000 acres of the settlements have passed in this way into the hands of 3000 purchasers. M'Kenzie, who came in in January 1891, did not discourage the Ballance villages, but his heart was in other work. The maximum size of a village allotment was increased from 50 to 100 acres. The tenure was altered from perpetual lease, with revaluations every thirty years, to a lease for 999 years without revaluations. The rent was lowered from 5 per cent to 4 per cent on the unimproved value, and the minimum value for appraisement of rent reduced from £1 to 10s. per acre. Advances to settlers virtually ceased to be made. On these terms village settlements were allowed to exist, though they have hardly become what Ballance hoped.

In March 1901 the 2011 selectors just spoken of were holding 42,000 acres, and they and their families numbered some 5500 souls. Rather more than two-thirds of them were resident on their plots, and the improvements they had made thereon were valued at £160,000. The total amount they had paid the Government in rent and interest during fifteen years was £44,000. The State had advanced them rather more than £15,000 for the purposes above described, and £3340 had been repaid. Nearly £12,000 more had been lent to selectors who had forfeited or surrendered their sections. In such cases the debt is recovered in one of two ways. The land thus thrown back on the Government's hands is sold or relet. The incoming tenant either pays down the value of the improvements on it at once, or they are added to the capital value of his selection when appraising his rent. In this way the Department of Lands has protected

itself against any appreciable loss on surrendered village sections. Financially, then, the village settlements are justified. Within their limits they may be accounted a successful experiment. The limits, however, are narrow.

M'Kenzie was not blind to the need for doing something in the way of putting moneyless and workless men on the land, though he knew how great the difficulties are which stand in the way. You may put them on the land; the problem is, how to keep them there! In 1894 he decided to try the experiment of employing a number of such men in clearing pieces of forest land. When the land is cleared it is offered to them in small farms of about 150 acres each. During the process of tree-felling, scrubbing, burning, and sowing, the labourers gain both capital and experience. Small sums are also lent them in certain cases. The cost of the process is, of course, added to the value of the land in estimating the rental. In March 1901, 500 settlers were living on these "improved farms," as they are termed, and with their families their numbers may come to 2000. They were occupying 76,000 acres, on which they had made improvements reckoned to be worth £109,000. The Government outlay had been £68,000. Wherever the land is good, the settlers are reported to be doing well.

From what has been written here and in the last chapter, it appears that there are in New Zealand three classes of settlers to place whom upon the soil the Government has spent money in novel and exceptional ways. These are the village settlers, the improved farm holders, and the tenants of the repurchased estates. An estimate of the capital expended and still outstanding, in March 1901, in each case is interesting.

Against 2000 village settlers £12,000 was standing in the State's books ; against 500 settlers on the improved farms, £68,000 ; against 2000 tenants on the repurchased properties (including Cheviot), about £2,000,000. Each settler of the first class, then, represented £6 of outlay ; each of the second class, £136 ; each of the third class, £1000. As wealth-producers, of course, the farmers of the third class leave the other two classes far behind. Still the figures *donnent furieusement à penser*, and seem to me to indicate that village settlement, cautiously carried out, has still a future before it.

It is but right to point out that a number of the smaller properties bought under the Land for Settlements Act are in effect village settlements, for they have been parcelled out in plots of 20 or 30 acres each. On all the larger estates, too, are found at least a few small allotment-holders who make a living partly by cultivating their own land, partly by working for neighbouring farmers and run-holders. Near the larger towns, too, blocks have been repurchased and subdivided into small lots of from half an acre to five acres. These places are called workmen's hamlets, and are designed, like the homestead blocks round Adelaide, to be sites for cottages and gardens, where artizans and labourers may live and employ their spare time or slack seasons. When the first one or two of these hamlets were opened for selection, they seem to show that the desire of the average New Zealand artizan for three acres and a cow was not of the keenest. After a while tenants for most of the sections came forward, and the hamlets now promise well. All the residents, however, can hardly be classed as workmen.

In 1893 the Victorians followed the example of

South Australia and New Zealand, and sought in village settlement a remedy for the distress of their unemployed in Melbourne and elsewhere. By a law passed in the August of that year they set aside 156,000 acres of land for village communities and homestead associations. The former were simply groups of allotments, of from one to twenty acres each. After being occupied, under a permit, for three years, they might be purchased conditionally in twenty years more. The latter had a slight tinge of communal organisation. At least, their allotments, which might be as large as 50 acres each, were surveyed so as to surround a "township" of 100 acres, of which 40 acres were to be a municipal reserve. The other 60 were to be divided amongst the members of the association, who would, it was expected, prefer to live on them in close neighbourhood, going forth each morning to work on their surrounding allotments. It is sufficient to say that these associations have been so much less successful than the ordinary villages that settlers are not now encouraged to form them. The villages as a whole may fairly be called successful. The usual mistakes were made at the outset. Though one-fourth of the applicants for plots in them were rejected, a certain number of unsuitable persons slipped past the authorities. Second-rate men were placed upon second-rate soil. One site, for instance, was officially described as consisting of "poor, rangey land, except in one small portion which was on the top of a mountain." Here and there the system seemed a failure. Visitors to Victoria who inquired about it were often told that the settlers were merely playing until their loan money was spent. Two-thirds of the land set apart for the settlements was found useless for the purpose. The

maximum both of the loans to settlers and of the acreage of their lots had to be increased, and in 1895 and 1896 many heads were shaken over the Victorian villages. Most of the settlers, however, laboured manfully on their holdings, and were not seldom helped by their wives and children. Anything would be better than to go back to Melbourne and the bitter bread of charity! The wives especially, said one report, seemed to dread the big, hot, overgrown city. In less than a year after the passing of the "Settlement on Land Act," nearly 7000 souls were living in the new communities. In June 1898 their numbers had mounted to 9000. Four-fifths of the settlers were married men.

In June 1901 there were seventy-eight village settlements in Victoria, and the settlers therein were 2163. Of these, all but two hundred were living on their selections; the non-residents were improving theirs. The choice of some of the names for the villages shows the intrepidity of Australian patriotism. Among them are found Bumberrah, Colbinabbin, Coongulmerang, Dimboola, Wail, Ganoo Ganoo, Koonoomoo, Muckatah, and Darnum. The number of men, women, and children actually on the ground was 9183, and the area occupied was 55,000 acres. At the same date, £67,245 had been advanced to them in the course of eight years, nearly all of it in the first four. Between June 1897 and June 1901 the monetary aid given by Government was only some £3000. They had paid back £6658. More than one-third of the repayment had been made in the year ending with June 1901. The improvements were valued at the respectable figure of £187,000, and the live stock at £57,000. 20,000 acres were under cultivation, and 120,000

chains of fencing had been erected. Though, therefore, the population of the communities had been almost stationary for three years, their financial position was growing better. They were beginning to do without loans from the Government and to pay back what had been lent them, and their wealth —their live stock and improvements—was becoming substantial.

Two of the Victorian village communities call for a special word. These are placed on a swamp, Koo-wee-rup, forty-six miles south-east of Melbourne. Ten years ago the great morass covered 53,000 acres. In form it was an irregular oval, and its expanse was clothed with a thick green sheet of scrub, and with an undergrowth of reeds and other marsh plants. Its measure from north to south was eighteen miles, and in the eighteen miles there was a fall of 120 feet. The Government resolved to drain it, and began a main channel twelve feet deep, ninety feet across at the top, and a chain wide at the bottom. In 1893, when they had already spent £87,000 on the reclamation, they planted two villages on the swamp. The settlers were partly of the Melbourne unemployed, and in part country labourers who had fallen on bad times. In 1895 there were 550 of them on Koo-wee-rup, holding allotments of drained or half-drained soil. The interesting feature about them was the half-time system under which they were employed on the drainage works. Under this the Government engaged twice as many of them as there was regular work for. They were divided into two bodies and taken on in fortnightly shifts. Each man worked a fortnight at a time, and was then paid and sent back to spend another fortnight in improving his allotment. Enough piece-

work was given them during each two weeks of their labour for the Government to enable them to earn £5 if married, or £3 : 10s. if single. During each spell at home they were expected to make at least fifty shillings' worth of improvements on their holdings. A monthly inspector saw to this. Men who preferred drinking-bouts to working on their holdings were weeded out. The steadier kind were enabled to support their families while building their homes and getting their plots fenced and cultivated.

To sum up very briefly, we find a satisfactory amount of success amongst the homestead blocks of South Australia and the village settlements of New Zealand and Victoria. In South Australia success has been gained in the face of some cruelly adverse seasons; in the other two colonies, especially in Victoria, many initial mistakes were made, but the results on the whole are cheering. On the other hand, co-operative settlement has generally failed—utterly in Queensland and New South Wales. Broadly considered it has failed even in the thirteen villages of South Australia, where the Government and public opinion were really friendly, and where success might reasonably have been looked for. Generally, village settlements have emphasised certain truths which were not new twenty years ago. They have shown that for peasants, as for other settlers, knowledge of country life, good land, a fair rainfall, and a site not hopelessly remote usually make the difference between success and failure. If any of these things are to be dispensed with, then exceptional gifts of character are needed to carry villagers through. Co-operation in the wilderness is not a gospel for inferior men and undisciplined minds; it is doubtful

whether even settlers of more than average quality will make profitable and lasting use of it, unless they are bound together by some strong tie of distinctive sentiment or belief.

Perpetual Leases

Confronted with the state of things summarised in a previous chapter, the more or less Progressive governments which have held office in the colonies since 1890 have tried this or that remedy. They have gone on with old plans, such as conditional sales of small areas, trusting to closer inspection to prevent the old evils of dummyism and speculative resale; or they have tried new remedies, land taxes, repurchase, village settlements. Now I must speak of a remedy which has been employed here and there, though by no means to the extent which might have been looked for. I mean perpetual leasing. In 1882 most observers, if asked what colonial Progressives would do if they really gained the upper hand, would have answered—Stop the sale of Crown lands! It was the least that could have been expected of men who talked and wrote as the Progressives talked and wrote in the eighties. Yet one of the chief features of the laws and changes of the last twelve years is the failure of the movement against parting with the freehold of Crown lands. Twenty years ago this seemed to be gathering strength; ten years ago it appeared very strong indeed. Yet, except in South Australia, its success has been small at the best. Even sale by auction, that *bête noire* of the land reformer, goes on. In South Australia and New Zealand, indeed, little but town or suburban land is sold in that way, and auction sales bring in but a few thousands a year. In Victoria

the return from them has been about £19,000 a year since 1896, and the smallness of the sum is seen when it is compared with the progress payments from conditional purchasers, which have varied from £206,000 to £290,000. In New South Wales, where the return from auctions was £102,000 in 1898, £72,000 in 1899, and £123,000 in 1900, and in Queensland, where a million acres have been sold under the Special Sales of Land Act of 1891, auction sales still play a large part. Next, we must reckon sales to selectors for cash, though not by auction. In New Zealand, under the head of "selected for cash under settlement conditions," nearly 290,000 acres are returned as disposed of during the last ten years. In Australia, outside Queensland, the sales have mainly been not for cash, but to selectors under conditional purchase, and the money received represents annual instalments and completions of purchase. In Victoria the land revenue returns, which give these under the head of "Alienation otherwise than by auction," show that £1,500,000 has been paid in during the five years 1896-1901. A much greater sum has been yielded by conditional purchases in New South Wales. There the normal receipts still amount to considerably over a million yearly. In Western Australia small areas of from a quarter of an acre to five acres are leased by the State as sites for houses and gardens in goldfields and other centres of population. The rent is the nominal sum of ten shillings a year; the term of the lease is for twenty-one years. The freehold is absolutely reserved to the Crown. In 1899, applications for 523 of these plots were granted; in 1900 the number rose to 1239. But in the ten years 1891-1900 the West Australian Government sold 8620 acres of town and suburban land for £422,000. In the same

ten years an area of rural land well over a million acres in extent had been alienated. Rather more than as much was in 1900 held by selectors under various forms of conditional purchase all ultimately convertible into freeholds. Then, in New Zealand, the pseudo-perpetual lease of 1882 (abolished in 1892) has borne its expected fruit. At the end of 1891 over a million acres were held under this tenancy. In March 1901, so freely had the tenants made use of their option to buy, that nearly three-fourths of this land had been turned into freehold. Further, the process of turning the old conditional purchases (called in New Zealand deferred payment licenses) into freehold had been going on steadily. So in March 1901 the area held in freehold in New Zealand, which had been 12,400,000 acres a decade before, had increased to over 14,000,000 acres. If this was the position in a colony where a strong Progressive party had held office during the ten years under review, what was to be looked for in Eastern Australia? In Victoria, it is true, perpetual leasing had been sanctioned in 1898, and the leases contemplated by the Victorian law were to be subject to a reappraisement of rent every ten years. But as, after each reappraisement, the tenant is to have the right, if dissatisfied therewith, to turn his tenancy into a holding under conditional purchase,—in other words, to put himself in the way to obtain the freehold,—it is easy to see what will become of the experiment. The example of New Zealand has shown that clearly.

The State, then, still goes on selling the fee-simple of broad lands, and in several colonies the curious spectacle is seen of the Minister of Lands selling a great deal of land very cheaply, whilst buying a little at much higher prices. In Queensland and Victoria the process

goes further, for the land thus repurchased is at once resold. Yet the protests of land reformers have not been quite unavailing. In South Australia, as we have seen, perpetual leasing has long been embodied in the land system. In 1901 more than seven million acres were held in this way, an amount not far short of the whole area sold and held in fee-simple since the colony was founded. This considerable estate (7,143,000 acres) is held without a right of purchase, and in the land reformers' eyes South Australia, therefore, has done excellently. New Zealand in 1892 decided to abandon the pseudo-perpetual lease (State tenancy with a right of purchase), and try a new tenure. For fifteen years the advanced guard of the Progressive party had been struggling for a rigid system of State leasehold with periodical revaluations and without any right of purchase. In 1892 M'Kenzie and Ballance decided to try a compromise, and succeeded in inducing their party to vote for a form of lease for 999 years under which the tenant should pay an unchanging rent of 4 per cent on the value of the land when allotted to him. While thus escaping revaluations, he was to have no right of purchase. Personal residence during the first ten years, substantial improvement, restriction to an area of a square mile or less of agricultural land, and a power given to land boards to veto transfers were features of the tenancy. Its name is the lease in perpetuity, and about 1,200,000 acres are now held under it, of which rather more than two-thirds is land which selectors have deliberately preferred to take up as tenants in perpetuity. They might have bought it for cash or by conditional and deferred purchase; they have preferred the eternal lease. The remaining third of the area represents land offered under this tenure without any option, as is done

with the repurchased estates when cut up in the manner described in the last chapter. Though the lease in perpetuity sacrifices the cardinal principle of revaluation, it has solid merits, and should continue to be instrumental in promoting genuine settlement and improvement so long at least as land boards do their duty. Under it, the occupier has a tenure as secure as a freehold, yet can keep his capital to spend on improving his holding, while the State, though it loses the unearned increment, can always insist that a genuine working settler shall live on each farm. In more than one way the lease bears an odd likeness to the old quit-rent system of the despotic governors of New South Wales. It is curious that after one hundred years the most experimental and democratic of the colonies should unconsciously have reverted to something like the practice of Governor Phillip. It will be more curious still if the perpetual leases should end in the same way as the quit-rents, and political pressure should some day secure for the tenants the right of turning their leaseholds into freeholds. Meanwhile, as already explained, both selling for cash and selling on deferred payment still go on freely in New Zealand, and the subjoined table shows how strong the preference for the freehold yet is amongst New Zealand settlers. It indicates how they choose when, as is usually the case, they are offered public land under whichever tenure they like best. It gives the results of nine years of the optional system now in force.

[TABLE.

Year.	Conditional Purchase.		Lease in Perpetuity.		Cash.	
	Number of Selectors.	Area.	Number of Selectors.	Area.	Number of Selectors.	Area.
		Acres.		Acres.		Acres.
1892–93	161	54,271	126	55,320	325	35,785
1893–94	461	108,133	447	151,324	249	33,200
1894–95	398	75,477	336	87,374	174	33,323
1895–96	431	84,967	415	89,144	169	26,030
1896–97	277	59,647	278	62,229	90	9,835
1897–98	380	81,414	299	76,953	65	6,680
1898–99	458	109,949	362	99,262	114	17,824
1899–1900	395	117,771	348	111,108	95	16,510
1900–1901	673	262,729	295	97,138	127	37,862

When Reid became Premier of New South Wales and formed his Free Trade ministry in 1894, he did not gather round him a group of ministers very much above the average. Amongst several commonplace politicians there was, however, one small but sturdy figure, the Secretary for Lands, a dark, deaf, resolute, level-headed little man,—Carruthers by name,—who knew his business, meant to leave his mark on his colony's land system, and did so. In a speech of striking ability, delivered in the Lower House on 13th September 1894, Carruthers introduced a Crown Lands Bill of more than ordinary interest. After summing up the failures of the past, he indicated what was proposed for the future. The public estate, still vast,—for even after thirty-three years of free selection three-fourths of it was left,—was to be properly classified. Lands fit for close settlement were to be gradually resumed from the runs, and were to be dealt with as fast as there was any demand for them. Classification was not to be confined to dividing the colony into three immense districts, and its lands merely into pastoral and agricultural. Farm land was to be classified according to its value, and the old fetish of a uniform price to be cast down once for all. In return for the loss of the resumed areas of their

runs, squatters were to be given extended leases of the remainder; lessees were to be permitted to apply for reappraisements of excessive rents, and a measure of tenant-right in improvements was at last to be given to pastoral occupiers. Four principles were to be observed, which would, it was hoped, defeat dummyism. Henceforth no man was to select Crown land more than once in his lifetime; no man already owning four square miles of land might select from the public estate; perpetual residence was to be imposed on a certain class of settlers; finally, the onus of proving good faith was to be laid on the selector.

Grazing farms, to be called settlement leases, were to be encouraged; but the most interesting of Carruthers' proposals was that of a form of perpetual lease, to be tried under the name of homestead selection. Anything in the shape of perpetual State tenancy was so novel and thought so heretical in New South Wales, that Carruthers did not venture to call his new departure by its proper name. He gingerly styled it a freehold, subject to the obligations of perpetual rent and perpetual residence. Its attraction to the selector was to be an exceedingly low rental. For the first five years of occupancy this was to be $1\frac{1}{4}$ per cent on the capital value. At the end of the five years the occupier was to receive his Crown grant, and thereafter pay double rent. On land worth £1 an acre the rent would thus be threepence an acre for the first five years, and sixpence for the next five. Subsequent revaluations were to come at intervals of ten years. On a homestead selection of one square mile at this rate, the annual rent would be £8 at first, and not more than £16 at any time for ten years. The only improvement insisted on was a dwelling-house, but personal residence was required for

five years. After that an agent might take the owner's place. The Act was also to allow selection without personal residence, but only if the selector satisfied the land board that his occupation obliged him to live elsewhere; that he intended as soon as he could to make the selection his home; that he was prepared to keep a deputy in residence on the land, to build a house thereon, and to cultivate from one-tenth to one-fifth of the soil.

The system of homestead selection deserves to be thus described in detail, because, unlike many other agrarian schemes, it has been tried, and tried on a large scale. The Carruthers Act became law in 1895, and by the end of 1900 homestead selections numbering 3519 were being held, covering 1,390,000 acres. To this was added a certain area (some 25,000 acres) occupied by selectors under other tenures, who had converted their holdings into homestead selections. At the same time it must be borne in mind that in 1900 the area of State land sold by auction, or allotted to conditional purchasers in New South Wales, was just about twice the quantity granted to homestead selectors.

In four colonies, then, there are laws providing for the perpetual leasing of small holdings of farm land. The Victorian law is illusive; those of New South Wales, South Australia, and New Zealand are not shams and are freely used, but the New Zealand system does not stipulate for revaluations. Otherwise the sale of the fee-simple still goes on in the seven colonies. Pastoral lands are leased, but lands taken up for tillage are sold conditionally or for cash. In other words, the better lands are still passing into private hands, and the prospect is that State ownership will be more and more restricted to pastoral territories, extensive but of poor

quality.[1] It may, however, fairly be claimed that most of the land sold conditionally during the last twelve years has gone to working farmers. To what extent that can be said of lands sold by auction, I express no opinion. But the conditional purchasers are in the main genuine settlers, and have helped to build up the dairy export trade in the way sketched later on.

Governments as Lenders on Mortgage

Englishmen are so used to see their colonies in the rôle of borrowers, and pretty liberal borrowers too, that there may be a certain spice of novelty in viewing them for once as lenders of money. Naturally enough the Mother Country knows little of colonial lending systems, for while the colonies do their borrowing in London, they do their lending on the other side of the ocean. Lending, with them, begins at home. Moreover, it only began the other day. Their borrowings are no new thing: the Colonial Office could testify to the keen appetite for parental loans shown by the very smallest and youngest of England's children. Colonial lendings began much later. The transactions I am to describe, indeed, had their origin in statutes the first of which were passed in 1894. Long before this much lending of mortgage-money had been done by colonial public departments like the savings banks and the New Zealand Government Life Insurance and Public Trust Offices, but these were commercial transactions only, without any special policy or object.

I will not enter upon any abstract discussion of the wisdom, justice, or expediency of State money-lending

[1] In New South Wales, for instance, at the end of 1900, the land actually alienated was 26,000,000 acres, and the land in process of alienation 20,000,000 acres. This left the State 146,000,000 acres.

—of State-loans to corporations, firms, or private citizens. Loans from the Treasury to cultivators and other owners of land and immovable property are not a modern invention. To go no further, England and Ireland have had plenty of experience of them in this century. If, therefore, lending be permissible to such a government and in such a country as the United Kingdom, *a fortiori* it may well be undertaken by governments in young countries where the demand for capital is keen, and the supply much less regular, and much more exposed to artificial interruption. If in London, the capitalists' capital, the centre of money-lending, where that gigantic web of usury is spun which holds the world in its network, public opinion tolerates State-lending, what may you not expect at the Antipodes?

The English investor who lays out his money at the other end of the earth will, of course, expect some special reward for the enterprise which leads him to send it ten or twelve thousand miles—usually to be invested on a security which he never has seen and never will see. This is so even where he lends directly or through an agent, who simply accounts to him for the interest, and is paid by commission. But where, as has been common enough, the English capitalist lent money at from 4 per cent upwards on debentures to a money-lending company or agency, which in turn put out the money amongst colonial borrowers, it meant that two, three, and sometimes four sets of people had to make two, three, and four corresponding profits. Forty years ago it was quite a common thing for farmers and flock-owners in Australasia, even those in a considerable way of business, to pay 15 per cent for advances on their wool, sheep, or crops. I do not mean that 15 per cent

was expressly charged; the rate on the advance would be nominally 10 per cent; but the loan would be for six months, and 2½ per cent commission would be levied twice a year. Where the security was first-class and a mortgage was executed for a term of years, the rate would be somewhat less. From 1850 to 1870 mortgage rates varied from 9 to 7 per cent. By 1890 they had fallen to 6, 7, and 7½, but only on the cream of landed property. As late as 1895 a Government return of the registered mortgages in New Zealand showed that the rates of most ran from 6 to 8, and even in some cases to 9 and 10 per cent, though certainly by that time a small amount of money was out at 5½ to 6 per cent. If these rates were exacted on the registered mortgages secured on the best class of real property in the colony, it may be imagined that the second and third classes of borrowers had to pay a good deal more. Until about seven years ago the legal rate of interest allowed by courts of justice on unpaid debts was 8 per cent. It was then reduced to 6. Thanks to the cheapness and simplicity of the Torrens system of land transfer and registration (which included the registration of charges upon land), lawyers' costs were much lighter after 1870 than before; that is, they were much lighter on all land brought under the operation of the Transfer Acts. For we must remember that much of the older settled and most valuable land in the colonies has never been brought under the Acts. Its title is still based upon deeds kept in a strong-box, and much of the old, dreary process of searching and conveyancing has to be gone through when anything is done in connection with it.

From decade to decade the rates of interest gradually fell. Some eight or nine years ago a section of land was sold in my native town, Christchurch (N.Z.). The

entries against its title showed that it had been mortgaged for forty years, but that the rate had been gradually reduced from 16 per cent to 6½ per cent.

The reduction process, however, rapid as it may look to the economist, seemed cruelly slow to the working settlers who had to pay the rates, commissions, and law costs. Their burdens were all the greater because the falling of the rates of interest was accompanied—nay, invariably preceded—by that remarkable fall in the prices of raw produce which was the talk of the world between 1873 and 1895, and which brought upon thousands of indebted growers of wool and grain in Australasia ruin as dire and inevitable as that which has befallen the sugar planters of the West Indies. The ups and downs of prices of wool, wheat, frozen meat, tallow, leather, and potatoes, which have affected the growers in the seven colonies, are hard enough for mortgaged farmers to bear. In four of the seven — or over the greater part thereof—he has to face, periodically, droughts, such as the terrible spell of dry weather which has afflicted much of pastoral Australia for the last seven years. In an Australian drought of the severer kind crops are not worth reaping; pasture not only withers, but disappears; the dried surface of the earth is blown about in dust storms; cattle die in tens of thousands, and sheep in millions.

Though the last decade, taken as a whole, has not been altogether a bad time for the colonial farmer as distinguished from the squatter, still, the average of the prices got for his produce since 1890 has been such that 7 and 8 per cent have ceased to be endurable rates of interest. He must have cheaper money if he is to live. If this be so when prices are at an average level, it is easy to understand that in years like 1893, 1894, and

1895, when depression was extreme, the bitter cry of the indebted farmer was heard very loudly indeed.

Now the farmer and sheep-owner are not only relatively a more important economic element in the colonies than here, but they are more powerful in politics. The British globe-trotter is told in Australian clubs that the working-man rules the colonies. The artisan and the shearer, no doubt, have their say in public affairs. But, one year with another, they are less powerful than the tillers and graziers. When, therefore, the latter were pressed to the wall in the bad times of 1893-95, it was natural that their Governments should cast about for means to help them. In the colonies Governments are, rightly or wrongly, expected to be of use in a public emergency, and under the head of public emergency dull times are included. Long before this the high rates of interest in the colonies had had their share in impelling the colonial Governments to build railways, telegraphs, and other public works, such as in England were usually left—at any rate in those days — to private enterprise. The Governments could borrow money far more cheaply than private speculators. Between 1894 and 1900 this State interference was carried a step further, and in six colonies statutes were passed by which the community became the rival of the private lender of capital. These I will now sketch.

These Advances Acts, as they are usually termed, are meant to be permanent. They are not intended to be mere exertions of public generosity put forth to enable some deserving class to tide over some short, sharp crisis. They are to be a new sphere of State activity, a complete and lasting assumption by the State of the part of money-lender. The community

has entered into permanent competition with the private usurer. So long as the Treasuries can borrow money at something like current rates, it is not likely that lenders on mortgage in the colonies will have much chance of seeing rates rise. State competition will keep them down very near to their present level.

The six laws are the New Zealand "Advances to Settlers Act," which was passed in 1894; the West Australian Agricultural Bank Act, 1894; "The State Advances Act of South Australia," 1895; the Savings Bank Amendment Act of Victoria, 1896; the State Advances on Land Act of Tasmania, 1898; and the Advances to Settlers Act of New South Wales, 1899, as expanded in 1902.

I will take the New Zealand Act first, partly because it was the first to be enacted, but more because much greater use has been made of it than of the others, and because the Australian laws differ more from the New Zealand statute than from each other. Under the New Zealand scheme, the author of which was Sir Joseph Ward, now Minister of Railways in that colony, an office, called the Advances to Settlers Office, was constituted under a superintendent, and a board, the members of which are leading civil servants, was set up to supervise and control the doings of the office. This board met for the first time on the 23rd February 1895. The borrowing of three millions of money was authorised by Parliament to provide the office with loan capital, and a million and a half was borrowed in London in the spring of 1895. This money the board proceeded to lend out on first mortgage on land used for farming, dairying, or market-gardening. Urban and suburban land used for building and manufacturing may not be

taken as security. Nor is any lending done on personal property. The Advances Office lends on freehold or on lands held from the Government on what is termed perpetual lease, or by certain other forms of conditional tenure ; it also lends to tenants of public bodies. Parliament originally limited the amount to be lent to any one borrower to £2500 ; this has since been raised to £3000. The smallest loan allowed is the modest sum of £25.

The first attraction of the office to the small mortgagor is the low fees it charges for inspecting and valuing property offered to it as security. Half a guinea only is charged to the applicant for £100 or less, and but a guinea where the sum asked for does not exceed £250, a guinea and a half between £250 and £500, and two guineas for anything up to the maximum amount of £3000. It sometimes happens that the land offered as security for a loan is so obviously unfit that the valuator sent to look at it does not trouble to inspect it. In that case he informs the superintendent accordingly, and no fee is charged. Otherwise the land is valued and a report made to the office.

The superintendent of the office has no power to authorise a loan ; only the board can do that, and before the board grants the money it must examine not only the report of its own valuers, but the independent valuation of the land made by the Government Land Tax Department—the valuations of which, inasmuch as they are made for taxing purposes, have been scrutinised, perhaps challenged, wrangled over, and reduced. At any rate, they are not likely to be too high, and form an admirable guide to the Advances Board and a guard against over-valuation of securities by the board's own valuers. To show that the system works well I need only mention that on the 31st March 1901 the super-

intendent was able to report that the office had no securities lying on its hands. When one remembers the disasters of many great private loan companies in the colonies,—how they have had great blocks of property thrown on their hands, how they have lost heavily, sometimes ruinously, in the endeavour to liquidate them,—one is fain to congratulate the Advances Office on this feature of its first five years' work.

After considering each application for an advance the board passes a resolution, which must be duly recorded, either granting the loan asked for, granting it in part, or refusing it. In the second mentioned case the applicant may close with the offer or may retire in disgust, and relieve his feelings amongst his friends at the expense of the board and its notions of valuation. It would, indeed, seem that the board's methods are not utterly incautious, for of the total amount of money applied for only about three-fifths has been granted and accepted. The other two-fifths represents loans which the board has entirely refused to grant, or of which it has not granted enough to tempt the applicants to close. The figures of the board's business for the six years ending with March 1901 were: Loans applied for, £4,541,000; loans granted and accepted, £2,679,000. The number of applications made was 12,999; the number granted, 8701. There were, therefore, from first to last, more than 4000 disappointed would-be borrowers. Of these 1230 had their applications granted in part, but were dissatisfied with the sum offered them, and preferred to decline it altogether. The value of the securities for the loans granted was estimated at £5,859,000.

How small are the valuation fees charged to applicants has already been mentioned. The legal fees on

the mortgaging and releasing are just as small. The humblest class of borrower—he whose loan does not exceed £500—gets off with a payment of twenty-four shillings and sixpence. For this his mortgage is prepared and perused, his title searched, and all registration work done. Should the loan be above £500, but not above £1000, another guinea is charged, and on sums between £1000 and £3000 the total cost comes to £3 : 17s. When the mortgage is released the fee in all cases is but five shillings. These model costs are levied where the title of the land mortgaged is under the Land Transfer Act. Solicitors are permitted to charge about twice as much when the land is not under the Transfer Act. But most of the property with which the Government Advances Office has to deal is registered under that Act.

The advances made are of two kinds—fixed loans and instalment loans. The former are for fixed periods of years not exceeding ten years, and do not differ very greatly from ordinary private mortgages at 5 per cent for a term of years, except that the mortgagee has the privilege of paying them off at any time. Only about £100,000 has been lent in this way.

Much the most interesting part of the Act is the system of instalment loans, under which more than £2,000,000 has been already lent out. This not only provides the means for tempting the farmer to borrow, but the machinery for extricating him from the grip of his indebtedness. Therein it differs from all other mortgage systems of which I have heard, unless, indeed, it may be said to aim at somewhat the same object as the Jewish Jubilee and the famous enactment of Solon. Under the instalment system the borrower pays 5 per cent interest; but his yearly payment is actually at the

rate of 6 per cent, 1 per cent of which goes to a sinking fund to repay the principal of the debt. Thus seventy-three half-yearly payments discharge the debt in thirty-six years and a half. The same payment has to be made every half-year, but as the principal grows less and less the part of the payment required for interest diminishes, and the part added to the sinking fund increases. After the twenty-second year the mortgagor may have the satisfaction of knowing that more of his 6 per cent is going towards wiping out his principal than is being absorbed in meeting interest. The following table shows how the instalment system works :—

TABLE OF PRESCRIBED HALF-YEARLY INSTALMENTS FOR EVERY ONE HUNDRED POUNDS OF THE LOAN

Half-year.	Prescribed Half-yearly Instalment.			Apportioned thus :						Balance of Principal owing.		
				On Account of Interest at 5 per cent.			On Account of Principal.					
	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
First . .	3	0	0	2	10	0	0	10	0	99	10	0
Second . .	3	0	0	2	9	9	0	10	3	98	19	9
Third . .	3	0	0	2	9	6	0	10	6	98	9	3
Fourth . .	3	0	0	2	9	3	0	10	9	97	18	6
Fifth . .	3	0	0	2	9	0	0	11	0	97	7	6
Sixth . .	3	0	0	2	8	8	0	11	4	96	16	2
Seventh . .	3	0	0	2	8	5	0	11	7	96	4	7
Eighth . .	3	0	0	2	8	1	0	11	11	95	12	8
Ninth . .	3	0	0	2	7	10	0	12	2	95	0	6
Tenth . .	3	0	0	2	7	6	0	12	6	94	8	0
Twentieth .	3	0	0	2	4	0	0	16	0	87	4	7
Thirtieth .	3	0	0	1	19	6	1	0	6	78	0	10
Fortieth . .	3	0	0	1	13	10	1	6	2	66	5	10
Fiftieth . .	3	0	0	1	6	6	1	13	6	51	4	11
Sixtieth . .	3	0	0	0	17	1	2	2	11	31	19	11
Seventieth .	3	0	0	0	5	1	2	14	11	7	7	0
Seventy-second	3	0	0	0	2	4	2	17	8	1	13	0

Under the instalment, as under the fixed system,

the mortgagee may pay off the whole of the principal and interest owing at any time, or he may deposit not less than £3 with the superintendent, and all deposits go to extinguishing the principal.

In five years £2,627,000 has in these ways been lent, out of which £496,000 has been repaid. The full figures for the sixth year have not reached me, but at the end of March 1902 the superintendent had the agreeable duty of reporting that all instalments of interest and principal due to date had been collected, and that no sum remained outstanding under these heads. Only one farm seems to have been foreclosed on during the six years of the board's operations, and that the superintendent was able to sell without loss. Of the advances made it is recorded that 63 per cent were applied to paying off mortgages already existing which had been bearing a higher rate of interest than 5 per cent.

In the case of instalment loans the advance may be equal to three-fifths of the value of the security if it be a freehold, and half the value of the lessee's interest where the security is leasehold. Fixed loans must never exceed half the estimated value of the property to be mortgaged.

Owing to certain oversights in the Advances Act and to borrowing too large a sum at the outset (£1,500,000), the board found itself during its first year encumbered with unremunerative money which it had no legal power to invest temporarily, but upon which it had to pay interest to the London lenders. Money to meet these interest payments had to be borrowed from the New Zealand Treasury, and the critics of the Advances Office did not fail to make the most of its difficulties. All these, however, have been successfully surmounted. The loans of the Treasury have been re-

paid, and the office is now able to meet its half-yearly interest payments without help of any kind. The net profits at the end of March 1901 were £50,654. A year later £43,000 had been set aside to form an assurance fund. The sinking fund, devoted to repaying the instalment mortgages, amounted in March 1902 to about £96,000. By law it is deposited in the Public Trust Office of the colony.

The officers of the Advances Department are forbidden by law to divulge particulars about value, business, and income which they may learn in course of their duties. They are criminally punishable if they take a bribe or illicit commission, but, so far, there has been neither charge nor suggestion of any such misconduct.

The South Australian Advances Act was passed a year after the New Zealand Statute which I have been describing. Its short title is the State Advances Act, 1895. The lending office established by it is called the State Bank; the members of the Board of Supervision are termed Trustees; the general manager is called Inspector-General. The business of the State Bank is to lend money to farmers and graziers in aid of rural industries. The Government reserves power to define rural industries by proclamation. The Advances Act itself, however, specifies that they shall include meat-freezing, wine-growing, and dairying. Wine-growing, I may mention, is a highly important industry in South Australia, just as meat-freezing and dairying are in New Zealand. Advances to farmers are not to exceed three-fifths of the value of the property, which must be freehold or leasehold held from the Crown. Where it is a leasehold, the State loan must not exceed half the selling value of the lease. In no case is the bank's

valuation of unimproved land to exceed the figure at which it is assessed for the Government land-tax—a very sound precaution.

The Trustees are colonists of standing. They receive a fee of £2 : 2s. for each meeting of the board which they attend, and a very moderate travelling allowance—10s. 6d. daily. Statutory penalties are provided for jobbery or misconduct.

The Trustees are authorised to lend money, not only to settlers, but to municipalities and other local bodies for all purposes coming within the scope of ordinary municipal enterprise, or to pay off former loans.

In the South Australian scheme we find a system of instalment loans and repayment by sinking fund as in New Zealand. As in New Zealand, too, the mortgagee may pay off the whole of his debt at any time on giving notice.

Instead, however, of a regular stipulation for seventy-three half-yearly payments, with a right to the borrower to hasten the end by depositing sums at any time to go in liquidation of the principal, the South Australian Act presents a complex schedule, defining the terms for which the borrower may agree to mortgage his land at the outset. The least of these is three years and a half, the longest twenty-one years. The one involves seven half-yearly payments of interest and principal, the other forty-two.

The arrangements for raising the capital for the boards to lend out is ingenious and economical. Instead of raising a large loan in London as the New Zealanders did at the outset, and having difficulties with the employment thereof until it is absorbed in the advances applied for by settlers, the South Australian Board raises money locally by issuing debentures called

mortgage bonds. These mortgage bonds yield $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent, and are guaranteed by the Government of the colony. They have a five years' currency, are negotiable, and interest on them is paid to the bearer. The board issues blocks of these as it requires money, and, so far, they have been taken up without difficulty chiefly by savings banks and insurance companies. Hence it comes that the board is able to claim that it does not borrow more money than is absolutely required, and does not have capital lying idle on its hands. On the other hand, it pays $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent for its capital, whereas in New Zealand the rate paid is from $3\frac{1}{8}$ to $3\frac{1}{4}$. From the borrower's point of view, however, the South Australian advances have one great advantage over those of New Zealand. The rate of interest is less by $\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. Instead of 5 per cent, $4\frac{1}{2}$ per cent only is charged. The office fees, too, are even lower.

At the end of March 1902 the South Australian Trustees had been at work six years and two months, and had lent out £713,000. Between £175,000 and £176,000 of this had been repaid, and £176,000 of mortgage bonds had been repurchased and cancelled. Two-fifths of the sum lent was put out during the first fifteen months after the Act began to work; since then the pace has slowly slackened. In March 1902, I find in the statement of liabilities and assets £711 put down as arrears of interest, but there is no entry of arrears of principal. The interest received by the bank in the year amounted to £23,000. The net cost of management of the South Australian Bank is £3400; that of the New Zealand Advances Office, £3933; that of the Victorian Advances Department and the West Australian Agricultural Bank, shortly to be sketched,

£4465 and £1450 respectively. In South Australia just over £3200 of this is set down to officials' fees and salaries. In New Zealand salaries amount to nearly £3200. I said "net cost" just now because I had deducted from the total expenses of management the various fees received by the offices. The South Australian fees are extraordinarily light. All mortgages there are prepared for nothing.

The Western Australian Agricultural Bank Act, 1894, so closely resembles the South Australian law just sketched, that it is only fair to point out that the Western Colony's Act was passed twelve months before the other. The bank has been at work for seven years, and is one of the best managed of its kind. Up to the end of 1901 it had then lent, or was in process of lending, £128,847 to cultivators and graziers. Of this, £100,000 had actually been paid over. The loans then numbered about 1300. In all cases the money had been advanced to settlers for the purpose of improving agricultural holdings, and the bank's report dwelt with some satisfaction upon the number and substantial nature of the improvements which its loans had helped settlers to make.

The Western Australian law imposes the very modest limit of £400 as the utmost advance to be made to any one applicant, stipulates that the interest is not to exceed 6 per cent, and expressly forbids loans for any other purpose than the improvement of holdings. An amending Act raises the limit of loans from £400 to £800. The provision for repayment is easy enough. After five years have elapsed from the making of the advance, the borrower must begin to repay it in fifty half-yearly instalments. In other words, he has

altogether twenty-five years, *plus* five, in which to free himself from the mortgage.

The law also, with praiseworthy prudence, gives power to the lending office to make advances by instalments instead of handing over the whole mortgage money as soon as the loan has been granted. The Government manager sees to it that each instalment is honestly applied to improve the mortgagor's property. If not satisfied on this point, the manager may refuse to hand over further instalments, and may even cancel the whole loan, and take immediate steps to enforce repayment of the part of the loan already given out. The regulations made under the Act are notable for their plain good sense, brevity, and caution.

The Agricultural Bank's report at the end of December 1901 claimed that for the sum of £99,962 actually lent, improvements valued at £217,000 had been effected. Further loans to the extent of £29,000 had been approved, but not yet handed over. To entitle them to this the applicants were carrying out improvements estimated to be worth, when finished, £57,000.

In 1900-1901 the bank's income exceeded the expenditure by £375. The rate of interest charged to the farmers was 5 per cent; that paid by the bank itself was $3\frac{1}{2}$. The margin allowed for working and all expenses is therefore only $1\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. So far no losses whatever had been made, and payments on account of interest and redemption were coming in well. The year 1900-1901, being the sixth of the bank's operations, was the first in which the 4 per cent for sinking fund became payable. The improvements made by the borrowers came under the heads of clearing and cultivating land, ring-barking trees,

draining, fencing, sinking wells, and putting up farm buildings.

At the beginning of 1902 a Select Committee was set up to inquire into the operations of the bank, and to report whether the scope of these might not be widened. The committee's report, which was presented to the State Assembly at Perth in February, is very interesting, and the evidence printed with it is especially valuable, because it forms almost the only document in print showing in detail the working of a law of this kind. The committee blessed the bank with unction in these words:

"After the most critical examination, your committee has nothing but congratulation to offer upon the success of the bank. It is probably unique that a money-lending institution dealing with a multitude of loans has, in seven years, made a loss of only £10. No higher tribute can be paid to the work of the manager than the statement of this fact, and no better justification can be urged for the extension of the scope of the institution when taken in conjunction with the general satisfaction expressed by clients. . . . The time has arrived when its scope may be safely extended."

The committee therefore recommended that the bank should be allowed to advance money to cultivators to pay off existing mortgages, to buy live stock, and to improve orchards and vineyards. It also suggested that the maximum sum allowed to be lent to a borrower should be raised from £800 to £3000.

The Victorian Advances law was enacted in 1896, and was at work by the 24th December of that year. My information as to its working ends with June 1901, and relates therefore to a period of four and a half years.

The main intent of the Act was to empower the

Commissioners of the Government Savings Bank to lend money to the Treasury, receiving 3 per cent mortgage bonds in return — bonds redeemable after five years. The money thus lent forms the capital provided for the operations under the Act. These are simply advances to farmers, but, unlike the Western Australian law, are not confined to loans to enable the farmer to improve his holding. The borrowing, indeed, has been mainly to pay off old debts. Of £1,163,000 advanced up to 30th June 1901, all but £125,000 was applied to this purpose. Of the £125,000 remaining, £53,000 was borrowed to pay rents to the Crown, and only £72,000 to effect improvements. £140,000 of principal had then been repaid.

The Victorian farmer can repay his principal as soon as he likes, and must repay $1\frac{1}{2}$ per cent yearly, which, with his $4\frac{1}{2}$ per cent interest, makes 6 per cent, as in New Zealand, but with the advantage that the interest is $\frac{1}{2}$ per cent lower, and that the difference hastens the repayment of the principal.

In June 1901 the Advance Department could claim to show a good balance-sheet. The number of loans outstanding was 2323; only £62 : 16 : 1 of principal, and but £80 : 17 : 10 of interest were in arrears; only five estates had been foreclosed on and sold. The total loss thereon, after paying all expenses, was £45. The average amount of each loan was something over £500. The Victorian Advances Department, it will be noted, gets its money at 3 per cent as against about $3\frac{3}{16}$ in New Zealand and $3\frac{1}{2}$ in South Australia. Like the South Australian State Bank, it lends its money out at $4\frac{1}{2}$ per cent as against 5 per cent in New Zealand. As in South Australia, too, it has avoided the mistake made at the outset by the New Zealanders of borrowing

more money than they could quickly employ. On the other hand, the New Zealand lending board can and does work on a much larger scale. About £2,700,000 had in 1901 been lent by it, as against about £2,100,000 in the four Australian colonies hereinbefore referred to. The report of the Victorian Advances Department for 1899 points out that out of the mortgage bonds then outstanding more than four-fifths represented savings banks' money. Less than one-fifth had been taken up by the general public. The Commissioners decided to try and make the mortgage bonds more attractive to the investor by lengthening their currency. In August 1901 the treasurer stated that only a very small proportion had been taken by the public. It remains to be seen what steps the Victorians will take should a rush of applications for advances outrun the resources of the Savings Bank's Commissioners. Meanwhile, as in the other four colonies, the Victorian Act has been giving substantial help to the working settlers without costing the taxpayer anything, or giving the Treasury cause for the slightest anxiety.

In 1898 Tasmania passed a State Advances on Land Act. It proposed that three commissioners should be empowered to create 3 per cent mortgage bonds, and lend the proceeds of the sale thereof to farmers in sums of from £25 to £500. The borrowers were to pay 5 per cent on the money, 3 per cent interest, 1 per cent for "guarantee and expenses," and 1 per cent in redemption. I am informed that, so far, no use has been made of this law.

The New South Wales Advances to Settlers Act of April 1899 is a brief and, in comparison with some of the other lending laws, rather crude enactment. There

is the usual provision for an administrative board, which in this case consists of three persons, who may or may not be civil servants. To provide the board with loan-money the colonial treasurer is empowered to sell half a million of inscribed stock, the interest on which must not exceed 3½ per cent. From the preamble of the Act it would appear that the intention of its framers was to confine its operations to the relief of settlers in necessitous circumstances "owing to the present and recent droughts." The loans to be made to them were defined as temporary advances, and were to be repaid within ten years. The money was only to be lent to freeholders, conditional purchasers, and lessees of Crown land. Each loan was restricted to £200, and was to be repaid, with interest at 4 per cent, within ten years. All other conditions as to loans, securities, and repayments were left to regulations and the board's discretion.[1]

The board was at once set up, and proceeded to borrow £220,000. This it obtained very cheaply, as the Treasury was able to get the money by selling inscribed 3 per cent stock. The rate of interest charged to the farmers was 4 per cent, and on these terms £203,000 was lent out by the end of 1900, in small sums, the average amount of which was £76 : 10s. The amount applied for had been nearly twice as much as the amount the board had approved of. Many applications were only granted in part, and about sixteen hundred were refused outright. A considerable sum borrowed—£41,000—represented debts due from Crown tenants to the State, and this money was handed over to the Government by the Advances Board. The cost

[1] An amending Act of 1902 gave the board discretion to lend to others beside sufferers from drought, raised the limit of loans to £500, and lengthened the term from ten to thirty-one years.

of administration appears moderate. The board claims that its clients are paying up in a way that is satisfactory when the continuous droughts are borne in mind.

As at least £800,000 more has been lent in the five colonies since the periods to which the balance-sheets used by me refer, the total amount now advanced must be well above £5,000,000. It is common knowledge that the operation of the lending laws has been coincident with a marked fall in the rates of interest. No one denies this, though opinions differ as to the share the Government advances have had in bringing about the change.

A return laid before the New Zealand Parliament gives particulars of the mortgages registered between April 1894 and April 1895—mortgages which represent, perhaps, a tenth of the private debts of the colony. Let us compare it with a similar return for the period between April 1899 and April 1900. The earlier return dealt with the last year before the Advances Act got to work. The second return refers to a twelvemonth when the Act had been at work for four years.

Here is a table contrasting the rates and amounts of the two returns in so far as they deal with mortgages, the interest on which is specified :—

	Below 4 per cent.	4 to 4¾ per cent.	5 to 5¾ per cent.	6 to 6¾ per cent.	7 to 7¾ per cent.	8 to 8¾ per cent.	9 per cent. and upwards.
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
1894	2,000	74,000	353,000	1,654,000	1,015,000	543,000	220,000
1899	28,160	1,975,818	2,655,137	867,236	217,609	158,796	88,956

It may be noted, moreover, that the years 1895 to 1898, inclusive, were years of returning prosperity in New Zealand, when settlement and improvement were going

on quickly, the spirits of the farmers and graziers were reviving, and there was an increasing demand for money to be laid out on the clearing of waste lands and the development of partly improved properties. This makes the fall of interest rates the more noteworthy.

The large lending institutions of Australia and New Zealand have in the past fallen into trouble through two main causes. The first is over-valuation of securities; the second, a sudden recall of their capital by panic-stricken English and Scottish investors. So far the Government money-lending offices appear to have steered clear of the first rock. Their methods of raising money secure them against the second. The State mortgage systems have their defects doubtless. Most work has been done under the New Zealand law. But the plan followed in Western Australia deserves as much attention as any. The law there is too restricted, particularly in not giving help to the farmer who is already mortgaged to a private lender. Within its narrow limits, however, it is an excellent measure, and if "whate'er is best administered is best," it is probably second to no Advances Act in the colonies. A judicious blend of the New Zealand and West Australian systems might produce an even better law than either.

In Queensland, where graziers and cultivators have to face the novel conditions and special difficulties brought upon them by three or four semi-tropical or tropical climates, we expect to find the State called upon to co-operate with the producers of the colony in new ways. Nor do we look in vain. Queensland has not followed the lead of other colonies in going into the business of lending money in small separate sums on mortgage to all farmers able to give security. Her Government has preferred to assist selected industries,

and in dealing with these has not treated with individuals but with companies—usually large companies. The industries picked out for help have been sugar-growing, dairying, and the freezing and preserving of meat. To the first-named the State has been very liberal. In its attempts to help the sugar-planters the Parliament of Queensland has thrown aside the conservatism which the governing majority is usually understood to represent, and has tried a venture which in its way leaves the State socialism of mere Progressive parties behind.

The new departure was taken in 1893, and is found embodied in certain laws unpicturesquely entitled, "The Sugar Works Guarantee Acts, 1893 to 1895." With these the State came to the rescue of the sugar-cane planters at a time when the case of sugar-planting in Queensland was nearly as hard as that of sugar-planters in the West Indies. Some seven years before, an attempt had been made by Parliament to begin the needful but difficult work of suppressing the coloured labour traffic on which the planters relied. In consequence, the sugar industry stood still for six years. Then the attempt at suppression was abandoned, and it was decided to try reform—reform both of the traffic and the industry. Parliament took in hand the supervision and regulation of the labour schooners which voyaged among the islands of the Western Pacific with recruiting agents on board, whose business it was to enlist black men, and occasionally black women, for service in Queensland. Nothing could make the exploiting of the Kanakas anything but a black blot on a white community; but the worst features of the traffic were sternly put down, and in the work it did here State interference was amply justified.

To organise the sugar industry was a harder task. Growing sugar is one of the most risky of speculations. An industrious cane-grower may till the ground with all care, may select the best varieties of cane, and may do all that a single farmer can to combat vegetable and insect pests: he cannot control the supply or the price of labour, or the methods and machinery of the crushing mills and refining works. Here the State may help him, as the State has. But frost may still come, and rain may stay away, and prices—outside the protected home market—may fall and fall again. Obviously sugar-cane growing is a ticklish enterprise to meddle with. World-wide experience during the last generation has supplied tragical proof of this. The Queensland Government, however, was ready to run risks in 1893 rather than let one of its chief industries languish if not perish.

The object of the reorganisers—public and private—of the industry was to subdivide the cane-growing and centralise the crushing. The second task required the newest and most expensive machinery, and could best be done on a large scale. Indeed, only in large mills could a fair profit be looked for. In the early days of the industry estates had been large, and each estate owner's ambition was to own a mill, as in the West Indies. Later on a wiser policy was adopted by the Colonial Sugar Refining Company and other firms or associations, and the system of central mills came into general favour. It was this process of evolution which Parliament in 1893 decided to stimulate. It had already tried the experiment with success in two State-aided mills, and it now resolved to go further. In 1893, under the Guarantee Acts, the Government was empowered to lend money to groups of planters to

enable them to erect large central mills equipped with the completest and most economical machinery. The planters were to form associations for the building and management of these works; the surrounding growers were to guarantee regular supplies of cane; the Government was to supply plans of the best kind of buildings, and supervise the erection if asked to do so. The mills and machinery and the cane-lands of the borrowers were to form securities for the State's advances, on which $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent interest was to be charged. At first it was intended that the co-operators should borrow their capital under a State guarantee. It was soon found cheaper for the Government to raise the money directly, taking debentures to equal amount from the mill-owners, and holding them in the Treasury. These debentures the borrowing associations were to redeem gradually. The system planned in 1893 was soon in working order, and State help was without doubt a very good thing for the sugar industry. Mills were put up and equipped. Numbers of small cane-planters were enabled to cultivate patches at a profit. These bought or leased land from the larger owners,—a process which might have been hastened had the Guarantee Acts been accompanied with a law for repurchase and subdivision. In 1900 the capital invested in sugar-mills in Queensland was £2,800,000; the number of mills of all sizes, 66; the value of their product, £1,200,000; and the number of white workmen in the mills, 3100. No coloured labour was allowed in the working of the milling machinery. In and about the mills and on the plantations it was estimated that 20,000 Whites were living by sugar planting and crushing. The output of sugar had doubled in seven years, and the industry as a whole

was worked with more science and economy. The quantity of cane required to make each ton of sugar at the central mill was on the average a trifle less than nine tons. Thirteen central mills, with a yearly output of 32,000 tons of sugar, by that time owed their existence to the Guarantee Acts before mentioned. 861 cane-planters were sending in nearly 300,000 tons of cane to be crushed.

By 30th June 1901 rather more than half a million had been lent to build and equip the mills. Of this, £499,000 had been advanced on first mortgages and bills of sale, in the manner contemplated by the framers of the Acts, and £13,800 had been found to enable two mills, which the Government had taken over, to be carried on. The financial statement showed that nearly all the mills were in arrears with their payments of interest. Some were merely behindhand with the sum due for the last half-year; others owed more. Altogether, £52,000 was due to the Government under the head of interest. The amount of this paid during the year ending with June 1901 was £17,873. The total of interest paid from the beginning was £53,000. The state of the redemption account was worse. On 30th June 1900 only £5214 had been refunded under that head, and the Government was a creditor for a little more than £80,000. That was wiped out. In the next twelve months, however, though £11,500 was paid, fresh arrears to the extent of £9000 appear in the account. It is only fair to point out that the last seasons had been very much against the farmers. There had been a severe drought in more than one district, followed by sharp frost. Prices were so far from satisfactory in 1900, that out of thirteen central mills eight were being run at a loss. Five showed a profit after

paying working expenses, maintenance, and Government interest. Their rates of profit ranged from £1 : 6 : 9½ to £2 : 15 : 10½ on each ton manufactured. In addition to their debts to the Treasury, most of the companies had large bank overdrafts. On the whole, it must be candidly admitted that, however much good the sugar industry had done, the balance-sheets in 1900 and 1901 were none too satisfactory to the taxpayer. It would appear, however, that the taxpayer was by no means daunted by bad sugar seasons and the spectacle of interest falling into arrear. In 1900 he was still ready to put more money into central mills, for an amending Guarantee Act was passed authorising the lending of another £150,000 in the same way as the half million already advanced. Unluckily for the expectant planters, the Labour party managed to get a clause inserted in the amending measure forbidding the employment of coloured labourers of any race in the subsidised mills. This, as explained elsewhere, caused the Colonial Office to have the Bill vetoed.

The law under which State aid is given to meat and dairy companies is the "Meat and Dairy Produce Encouragement Act of 1893," as amended in the two following years. The principle of finance which is acted on in this measure is interesting, all the more because it is one now rarely asserted in the colonies. It is that of raising revenue by a tax upon a certain class in order that the money so raised may be spent for the especial benefit of the class from which it is collected. In Queensland, in the case under notice, Government professes to act merely as middleman. The money raised is treated as a trust fund, and the State acknowledges a duty to refund it ultimately to the taxpayer. The class taxed is made up of the owners of sheep and

cattle; the purpose for which their money is contributed is the subsidising of meat works and dairy factories. Parliament decided that it would tend to promote "the manufacture and exportation of meat and dairy produce" if suitable buildings and machinery were provided for the purpose; that as this would be for the common and especial good of all owners of sheep and cattle, it was just and equitable that such owners should contribute towards the necessary funds; and that for this reason it was desirable to tax them. So runs the preamble to the Meat and Dairy Produce Encouragement Act in language calculated to sicken the earnest individualist, or at least to impress him with the width of the gap which separates him from even the most conservative of colonial politicians. For the State socialism thus expressed was the policy of the party which in 1893 was holding office against the Queensland Labour party, the inheritors of the revolutionary socialism which had been preached by William Lane before he lost patience and took flight for Paraguay.

The Meat and Dairy Act, then, gave Government power to levy a tax upon each stockowner at the rate of fifteen shillings for every hundred of his cattle and eighteenpence for every hundred of his sheep. This rate was to hold good for the three years 1893, 1894, and 1895. During the two years succeeding these it might be cut down to one-third. At the end of five years the tax was to cease. In 1893-94 there were reckoned to be seven million cattle and nineteen million sheep in the colony. The moneys it brought in were to be divided and placed to the credit of two accounts—the meat fund and the dairy fund. To the dairy fund were to go all dairy cattle money, all the cattle tax contributed by owners of less than one hundred cattle, and one-tenth

of the remaining proceeds of the cattle tax. The rest of the sum raised by the cattle tax and all the sheep tax were to form the meat fund. It is significant that in practice the sums provided from the meat fund have been twenty times those found from the dairy fund. When the tax had been levied and had begun to furnish money, the Minister charged with the administration of the law might, under the authority of the Governor in council, make advances from the funds to the owners of meat works and dairy factories. The owners in return were to give security to repay the advances within ten years, with interest at the rate of 5 per cent. Neither principal nor interest was to be repayable during the first five years. The repayments were to begin in the sixth, and were to be made in ten half-yearly instalments. As the repayments were completed Government was to hand back his contribution to each taxpayer, who in the meantime was to receive a certificate acknowledging the amount of tax he had paid into the Treasury. In theory, therefore, the State was first to act as agent to collect moneys furnished during four years by cattle- and sheep-owners to be loan capital for certain undertakings of benefit to their class. Then the State was to apportion the loan capital among the enterprises for which it was destined. Finally, it was to collect the loans as they were paid off and return them to the lenders.

In 1898, accordingly, the tax was no longer imposed. From the budget and the report of the Auditor-General for 1900 it would seem that up to the end of June in that year something less than £97,000 had been lent to freezing and boiling-down companies, of which somewhat less than £6000 had been repaid. The loans had been made to eleven concerns, two of which

—the Gladstone Meat Works and the Queensland Meat Export Company—had borrowed half the total lent. In the next year—that ending with June 1901—droughts checked the meat industry and embarrassed the Treasury, and only £1500 was lent. This was advanced to the Mackay Meat Export Company to complete a loan of £6000 previously agreed upon. The security given in the case of both meat and dairy companies is in the form of mortgages over factory sites, and bills of sale over buildings and machinery. In June 1902 the Minister for Agriculture said that the borrowers were meeting their payments well, and that the Government contemplated paying a dividend to the contributing stock-owners.

Lending from the dairy fund had been done on a much humbler scale. By June 1901 the total sum advanced had not grown to £10,000. Speaking in June 1900 at an agricultural conference, the late Mr. Chataway, then Minister of Agriculture, dwelt hopefully upon the growth of dairying and of the number of co-operative companies. As an instance of the progress made by these when well managed, he quoted the success of the Pilton Company, which had built a factory in 1894 at a cost of £1100, borrowing for the work £462 from the Dairy Encouragement Board and £250 from a bank. In six years, though the milk it took in was but a little more than four hundred gallons daily, the company had doubled its machinery, paid off the bank, met the board's claim for interest, and all the while paid its shareholders the highest price for their milk given by any butter factory in the colony. One or two picked factories do not prove that a whole class flourishes. The figures show, however, that both in 1899 and 1900 Queensland's dairy produce had reached a value of

APPENDIX*

State Advances to Settlers in Australasia

Particulars.	Western Australia.	New South Wales.	Victoria.	South Australia.	New Zealand.
LEGISLATION—					
Acts passed	(1) "The Agricultural Bank Act, 1894" (58 Vict., No 21) (2) "The Agricultural Bank Act, 1894, Amendment Act, 1896" (60 Vict., No. 5) (3) "The Agricultural Bank Act Amendment Act, 1899" (63 Vict., No. 25)	"Advances to Settlers Act, 1899" (Act No. 1, 1899)	"Savings Bank Act, 1890, Amendment Act, 1896" (60 Vict., No. 1481)	"The State Advances Act, 1895" (58 & 59 Vict., No. 633)	"The Government Advances to Settlers Act, 1894" (58 Vict., No. 38).
ADMINISTRATION—					
Office by which administered	Agricultural Bank	.....	Savings Bank	The State Bank of South Australia	The Government advances to Settlers Office.
Constitution of Board	.....	Not more than three persons appointed by the Governor	Savings Bank Commissioners	Five trustees appointed by the Governor	Seven members, including the Superintendent.
Chief Executive Officer	Manager	.....	.....	Inspector-General	Superintendent.
FUNDS—					
How obtained	(1) By sale of Mortgage Bonds (2) From moneys provided by Parliament	By issue of Inscribed Stock	By Sale of Mortgage Bonds	By Sale of Mortgage Bonds	By Debentures or Scrip, or by the issue of Inscribed Stock, or otherwise.
Form of Security	*See* Schedule to principal Act. May be varied	.....	*See* First Schedule to Act	*See* Schedule to Act. Form may be varied.	
Maximum to be raised	£200,000	£500,000	£2,000,000	£3,000,000	£3,000,000.
Face value of Bonds, Stock, etc., issued	£10, £25, £50, £100, £500, £1000	£10 or some multiple thereof	£25	£10 or some multiple thereof.	
To whom Bonds, etc., are payable	Bearer or Order	Inscribed holder	Bearer	Bearer.	
Currency of Bonds, etc.	Not exceeding 20 years from date of Bond	Not less than 20 years from commencement of Act	.....	Not less than 5 years from date of issue	To be prescribed by agents appointed to issue same.
Rate of Interest to be paid	Not exceeding 5 per cent per annum	Not exceeding 3½ per cent per annum	Not exceeding 3½ per cent per annum	Not exceeding 4 per cent per annum	To be prescribed by agents.
Redemption of Bonds, etc.	By annual drawings, commencing after expiration of six years from date of issue	.....	By half-yearly drawings	By drawings.	
Minimum price of Bonds, etc.	To be fixed by Colonial Treasurer	.....	Par	To be approved by the Governor	Such price as will yield to purchaser not more than 4 per cent on purchase money.
ADVANCES—					
Persons to whom advances may be made	Farmers and other cultivators of the soil	Holders of Freehold Land, Crown Lands in process of alienation, and leased Crown Lands	Farmers, graziers, market gardeners, or persons employed in agricultural, horticultural, viticultural, or pastoral pursuits	(1) Farmers and other producers. (2) Local authorities. (3) Proprietors of Industrial Establishments.	
Property on which advances may be made	Holdings—(*a*) in fee-simple; (*b*) under S.O.L.; (*c*) under C.P.; (*d*) homestead farms	(1) Freehold land (2) Conditional purchases (3) Homestead selections (4) Crown Leases	(1) Land held in fee-simple (2) Crown Leases under which rent reserved is part payment of purchase money	(1) Lands held in fee-simple (2) Crown Leases (3) Rates	Land other than urban or suburban which is either— (1) Freehold in fee-simple. (2) Crown; Native and other Lands held under specified Acts.
Security to be taken	First Mortgage and transfer of lease	Security to satisfaction of Board	First Mortgage	(1) First Mortgage (2) Deed charging Rates	First Mortgage.
Limits of advance	(1) Not more than ¾ of value of improvements (2) Not more than £800 to any one person	Not more than £200 to any one holder †	(1) Not more than ⅔ of actual value, plus ¼ specially acquired value in case of orchards, vineyards, etc.; such additional value not to exceed £30 per acre. In case of Crown Leases, rents payable prior to issue of Crown Grant to be deducted (2) Not less than £50 nor more than £2000 to any one person or firm	(1) Not more than ⅔ of unimproved value and permanent improvements, plus ⅓ of specially acquired value in case of orchards and vineyards. In case of Crown Leases subject to right to purchase; unpaid purchase money must be deducted, and in other case unimproved value (2) Not more than £5000 to any one person, firm, or company (3) Special limits in case of loans to local authorities.	(1) Not more than ⅔ value of freehold lands nor more than ½ value of lessee's interest in case of lease. (2) Not less than £25 nor more than £2500 to any one person.
Purpose for which advances may be made	Improvements on holdings, clearing, cultivating, ring-barking, fencing, draining, wells of fresh water, reservoirs, buildings, and other improvements approved by the manager	For relief of settlers in necessitous circumstances owing to droughts †	(1) To pay off existing liabilities (2) To make improvements or develop agricultural, horticultural, and viticultural or pastoral resources	(Not specified except in case of advances to local authorities)	For the relief of settlers who are heavily burdened by reason of the high rates of interest charged on mortgage of land, and the heavy incidental expenses connected therewith.
Rate of Interest	Not exceeding 6 per cent per annum	4 per cent per annum	4½ per cent per annum	Not exceeding 5 per cent per annum	5 per cent per annum.
Interest payable	Half-yearly	In such amounts and on such dates as the Board may determine	Half-yearly on 31st March and 30th September	Half-yearly on 1st April and 1st October	Half-yearly.
Currency of advance	Not exceeding 30 years	Not exceeding 10 years †	31½ years, or such shorter term agreed to by Commissioners and borrower; 15 years in case of orchards, vineyards, etc.	Any complete number of half-years between 7 years and 42 years	36½ years.
Repayment	To commence from 1st January or July next following date of advance. Not less than 1-50th of principal to be repaid half-yearly	In such amounts and on such dates as the Board may determine	By half-yearly instalments, which together with interest make up a uniform half-yearly payment of £3 per £100 borrowed; £5, or any multiple thereof, may at any time be repaid, and will be accumulated at 3½ per cent, but will not affect uniform payments	By half-yearly instalments, which together with interest make up a uniform half-yearly payment. Repayment in part or in full may be made at any date of interest payment	By half-yearly instalments, which together with interest make up a uniform half-yearly payment of £3 per £100 borrowed; £5, or any multiple thereof, may at any time be repaid, and will be accumulated at 4 per cent, but will not affect uniform payments.

* This table is from a parliamentary paper of West Australia dated 5th February 1902.

† See footnote on page 348.

To face page 358.

between £650,000 and £700,000—a striking advance in what had been a few years earlier one of the most backward of her industries. In a small way the advance from the dairy fund did something to help this, though not nearly as much as the instruction provided by the Department of Agriculture.

Departments of Agriculture[1]

In all the colonies, albeit with very unequal efficiency, the State is now the chief agricultural teacher and adviser; and, with the assent of farmers and graziers themselves, is taking more and more power of active control over their industry. This form of State energy is of but recent display. Till about fifteen years ago the relations of the Governments with the producers were little more than those customary in other countries. Government was, of course, a great landlord — the greatest. But its huge pastoral estates were supposed to call for little supervision or improvement, and the average pastoral tenant wished for nothing so much as to be let alone. The chief exception to this inactivity was found in the laborious attempts which

[1] Authorities.—The chief are the annual reports of the Departments of Agriculture in New South Wales, Victoria, New Zealand, Queensland, and South Australia; the *Agricultural Gazette* (especially No. 1, vol. xii.), New South Wales, the *Queensland Agricultural Journal*, and, generally, the departmental publications. In Queensland the water-supply department reports annually. The ordinary official handbooks refer at length to land, climate, and farming. The transactions of colonial scientific societies, such as the Australasian Association for the Advancement of Science, and the New Zealand Institute, contain many papers on animal and vegetable plagues and acclimatisation. The New Zealand Dairy Industry Act was passed in 1898; the South Australian Fertilisers Act in 1900. Of the weekly newspapers a representative trio are the *Australasian*, the *Sydney Mail*, and the *Weekly Press* (New Zealand). See also H. D. Lloyd, *Newest England; Rural Economy and Agriculture of Australia and New Zealand*, by R. Hedger Wallace, London, 1891; and "Agricultural Education in Greater Britain," by the same (*Journal of the Society of Arts*), London, 1900; "Agriculture in New Zealand," by J. A. Gilruth (*Land Magazine*), London, 1901.

had to be made to eradicate destructive diseases of live stock—such as scab, animal pests—such as rabbits, or some specially alarming noxious weed—such as the so-called "Scotch" thistle. Nothing short of incessant scouting by a swarm of inspectors, backed by the stringent enforcement of legal penalties, would ever have cleansed the flocks of Australia and New Zealand from scab; just as, in late years, the tick-plague in Queensland has drawn upon all the knowledge and power of a skilled department. After scab had been stamped out the rabbit plague began to overspread the land. Had the agricultural departments which exist now existed twenty-five years ago, it is at least possible that the rabbits would have been checked at the outset, and that the colonies would have saved many millions sterling. As it was, this persistent scourge was allowed to get out of hand, and to become, what it still is, a costly lesson to show flock-owners that, if knowledge, industry, and forethought are to do their full work and reap their fair reward in a young community, they must be organised and directed by authority.

If colonial small farmers of the earlier generation had little help from the State in the way of advice and teaching, it was certainly not because they did not need it. Numbers of them were raw and inexpert men, who, knowing little or nothing of farming, were tempted into it by the cheapness and abundance of land, and by the want of other openings in colonies in their day. "Go to the land!" has been the advice given to all in discontent or distress in the colonies for a hundred years past. "Go to the land!" has been the doctrine preached to the hesitating, the enterprising, or the unemployed, by newspapers, orators, writers of books, by globe-trotters without any knowledge, and by old

colonists speaking from the fulness of experience. In this cry, at any rate, Progressives and Conservatives have joined. So fashionable has the agrarian cult been, that, at times, to be a townsman has almost been to wear a badge of inferiority, and large towns have been denounced as blots on the colonial landscape. Manufactures have been classed as artificialities, professional men as parasites, and artisans roundly termed a race of loafers. Even to-day numbers of intelligent colonists look upon the growth of their cities with mixed feelings —healthy, wealthy, and orderly as those cities are.

The temptation held out by tracts of vacant land, and the influence of the very natural and proper feeling that the main mission of colonists is to fill up and use these empty spaces, have helped to promote a steady annual flow of settlement on to the soil—settlement usually of the fit, but often of the unfit. Every year thousands of new homes are founded in the back country. Every one of these is a fresh venture, a bid for comfort and a livelihood—not for a fortune. Most of these brave little enterprises succeed, though many fail. In either case very little noise is made. Few onlookers trouble to watch the process of farm settlement; not many realise that it is going on to-day very much as it was going on three generations ago. The tide of occupation, as it flows into the wilderness, rises so slowly and trickles so quietly, covering day by day a flat here and a valley there, that its never-ceasing movement outward and onward passes almost unmarked. The enormous flocks and herds of the great pastoral owners, the feverish ups and downs of gold mining, the magical speed with which certain huge cities have sprung up, absorb the attention of the travelling impressionist. The struggles of the small country settler are seldom

watched, and are left unrecorded. The globe-trotter in a hurry, as he scampers over the country taking his hasty notes, does not find that the "cockatoo" furnishes much copy.

In the old world the farmer is a man bred to his business. Often enough his ancestors have lived on the land for generations before him—sometimes on the very farm he is working, at least in the same commune or parish. The European farmer may be stolid, narrow, half-educated, but he has a wealth of local experience handed down by his fathers, and slowly acquired from childhood. He and his labourers are land-wise and weather-wise; they know the soil and seasons by heart. They carry about stores of useful hints and maxims—are repositories of oral tradition. Their machinery may be behindhand and their methods slow, their enterprise small, and their prejudices unconquerable; but they know what results to expect from certain acres if they sow and till in a certain manner. The colonial farmer, on the other hand, has everything to find out. He has to learn all about his land, his climate, the diseases, insect pests and noxious weeds of the locality, what crops are suitable, what are not. Where he struggles through his difficulties and learns his lessons the outcome is often excellent. He and his sons become farmers, as good, perhaps, as the world can show, intensely industrious, but quicker to try experiments, pick up hints, and contrive improvements than the farmer of Europe. Often they appear as handy and shrewd as the Yankee of the older style, while less hard-driven and distrustful of theory and co-operation. The price paid in ruin and failure for developing this fine race has been in many districts cruelly and needlessly high. Skilful and experienced British and German farmers have too often

found themselves hopelessly adrift in hot Australia, and even in cooler New Zealand. There need be little wonder if settlers who were not trained farmers—sometimes not even country-folk—have failed as often as they have succeeded.

For whole generations Government did little more than look on and let the farmer fail or otherwise. Such information and advice as were given him came chiefly from weekly newspapers. These institutions of colonial country life—curious budgets of sport, news, and family reading—began many years ago to take in part the shape of agricultural journals. The first of them, the *Australasian*, was for long the best sheep-farmer's gazette in the colonies, and found capable imitators. Agricultural and pastoral societies were founded, and held meetings and organised shows of live stock and grain, and did much good work—are still doing it. As early as 1858, the Victorians, then the most energetic of all colonists, voted £5000 in aid of such societies. Yet, twenty years ago, organisation was lacking and small farming usually primitive. In Victoria good butter was often sent into Melbourne in despair, to be sold to the soap-boilers as grease. Much butter was not good, for each farm made its own, and often made it badly. In Queensland it is recorded that stud bulls were sometimes bred from cows chosen for breeding simply because they were too wild to be used as milkers. In more than one colony farmers could be found who grudged killing diseased cattle, or if they killed them threw their flesh to the pigs—a disgusting practice which has at last been put down. In all colonies there were farms where straw was burnt on the ground, "to get it out of the way," and times when fruit was left to rot in orchards because it did not pay to send it to

market. As for scientific instruction, it used to be said in New Zealand that, prior to 1890, if any one asked the Government for information on a matter calling for agricultural science, his inquiry was regularly sent forward to the colonial geologist. If the question had to do with insects the geologist took counsel of a certain telegraph clerk. If the clerk was puzzled, the twain would seek the advice of the registrar of the New Zealand University. Meanwhile, the need for advice, inspection, and something more went on steadily growing greater. The rabbit was but one of a score of pests—animal and vegetable — which were carelessly or unconsciously introduced. Hardly a cargo of grass-seed, for instance, was ever landed which did not contain an admixture of weeds and rubbish. A colonial botanist has described how, in a certain seaport, he examined a heap of rubbish thrown on shore in the clearing out of a ship's hold. On the rubbish-heap something like twenty specimens of strange weeds were growing. In some such way as this, doubtless, the cat's ear and the cape-weed, which is often mistaken for it, have become curses of wide tracts; and sorrel, Yorkshire fog, the Canadian thistle, and the Bathurst burr have added themselves to the farmer's worries. Sweetbriar and furze have spread from hedgerows over the hillsides of thinly peopled districts. The sparrow and the starling, introduced to keep down insects, prefer only too often to prey upon grain and fruit, just as stoats and weasels—another importation—divert their energies from their legitimate prey, the rabbit, to birds in general and the farmer's poultry in particular. The skylark pays himself for his song by taking toll of the fresh young blades of green wheat. The hare, though never the plague the rabbit is, does his share of destruction in certain spots. Foxes, brought

into Australia to furnish sport for the landowners of Western Victoria, have not only become a nuisance there, but have spread across the border into the southern districts of South Australia, where they make havoc amongst the lambs and poultry.[1] Dogs which have run wild in the bush will prowl round farms and kill sheep by the dozen. Wild cattle and their progeny tempt the settler's stock away into the forest. All animals which have escaped and are allowed to rove in the waste lands are a constant source of disease. Compared with imported plagues, native pests, such as the Australian dingo and the sheep-killing kea (the wild parrot of the New Zealand Alps), are enemies easy to cope with. It is the foes brought over from Europe or America that beat the cultivator and flock-owner. Phylloxera was discovered amongst the vines of Victoria and New Zealand many years ago. In the former colony it has been half-heartedly dealt with and allowed to infect vineyard after vineyard until it is now a danger to Victoria's uninfected neighbours as well as a scourge to Victoria herself. In New Zealand it was confined to a single district. There it has lately been taken in hand systematically, and has been stamped out. It should have been stamped out long ago. In the same way tuberculosis, which ought hardly to be found amongst colonial cattle, living as these do in the sunshine and open air all the year round, has been discovered often enough in the last few years to demand and receive the vigilant attention of the veterinary surgeons in most of the colonies. A commission set up lately in Victoria to

[1] The Shire Councils of Victoria pay rewards for the scalps of foxes. In seven years 137,000 scalps have been paid for. The Report of the Minister for Agriculture, South Australia, for 1901 says dryly—"We have an Acclimatisation Society, but, perhaps fortunately, it has from want of funds been able to do comparatively little."

inquire into complaints that the butter exported from the colony was "fishy" in flavour, took evidence which showed how unevenly dairy inspection had been carried out by local councils. In New Zealand the condition of many slaughter-houses of the smaller kind had to be publicly described in very plain language before Parliament could be startled into insisting upon a proper system of municipal abattoirs and the present thorough official inspection.

Great has been the change in the last decade. The five chief colonies have now well-organised agricultural departments with a strong family likeness to each other. In Queensland, as might be expected, the tropical climate has been the cause of certain distinct features. One of the most highly paid officers in the employ of the Queensland Government is Dr. Maxwell, chief expert and instructor in the business of sugar-planting. In New South Wales the department in anything like its present form and efficiency only came into existence in 1890. The New Zealand department is still younger; John M'Kenzie organised it in 1892. It now employs one hundred and forty officers, and costs over £90,000 a year; and there is probably no item of the estimates which the taxpayer grudges so little. In the larger colonies agricultural colleges have been set up with public money and are open to students, usually on easy terms. The first established was that at Lincoln, in Canterbury, New Zealand. South Australia followed with the college at Roseworthy. Victoria has two colleges—those at Dookie and Longerenong; and Queensland one, at Gatton, opened in 1897. New South Wales was behind most of the other colonies in establishing a good school of agriculture, but the Hawkesbury College, at Ham Common, near Richmond, though not

opened until 1896, has already won a good name for itself. Its students number about a hundred—a larger muster-roll than that of any other colonial college—and, by last accounts, there were more applicants for admission to it than it had room for. As much cannot be said for some of the other colleges, notably that of Lincoln, the small muster-roll of which has for many years caused searchings of spirit amongst New Zealanders who are anxious to see scientific farming more widely taught. These schools train students both in the science of agriculture and in the everyday work of a farm. Their methods vary, especially in the amount of time devoted to manual labour and the study of theory respectively. Their usefulness varies also. Still, young Englishmen who intend to settle in a colony and to invest capital in a farm would, as a rule, do well to take a course of study at one of these places, where they are likely to learn more for less money, and with less discomfort, than by paying a heavy premium to be allowed to work as a "cadet" on some sheep- or cattle-run. This is certainly the case with English lads who, before going to the colonies, have gained some knowledge of farm-work and country life. The colleges are useful experimental farms as well as training schools, and the experiments and reports of their directors and chemists are of value. But most of the colonies have now one or more experimental farms carried on by their agricultural departments. New South Wales, for instance, has five, placed wide apart in districts where the different conditions of climate are to be found which prevail on the coast, in the dry interior, in the semi-tropical north, and in the south. At one of these State farms twenty-five students are instructed; at a second, ten. At a

third, special attention is given to cultivating drought-resisting grasses and grains. At a fourth, experiments are made with varieties of sugar-canes imported from New Guinea and other countries. On the Murrumbidgee farm the best seed wheats are grown, and samples are sold to farmers, who buy them eagerly. Fruits suitable for drying are also raised. Maize, millet, sorghum, coffee, ramie-grass, pine-apples, bananas, and citrus fruits are amongst the plants experimented with on one or other farm. Side by side with them the grains, grasses, and fruits of England are reared. Work with live stock, such as cross-breeding and feeding trials, has of course its share of attention. Thousands of working farmers visit these experimental stations yearly, but, as a means of spreading knowledge, the institution of a travelling instructor and lecturer has been found even better than these visits. More is done by taking knowledge to farmers than by waiting for them to come for it.

In New Zealand the experimental farms have been the means of showing that the acacia (wattle), the bark of which is so useful for tanning, can be grown with profit in the colony; also that vine-growing may be a source of wealth there. Seeds and cuttings from these farms are often given to farmers without payment, on condition that, after planting them, they keep a careful record of results, and send their notes in to the department. Each State farm is a poultry station, not for the breeding of fancy fowls, but for demonstrating what breeds are best for laying and the table. Eggs are sold to poultry farmers to be hatched out. Last year 13,000 were thus placed out at five shillings a dozen.

In New South Wales and South Australia the

departments publish and circulate a monthly gazette. In the former colony 5000 copies of this are circulated amongst the farmers without charge. In New Zealand information is sent about in the form of leaflets.

All the departments devote themselves mainly to stamping out rabbits and other animal plagues, and diseases in live stock and plants, and to improving the quality of their colonies' products. In New Zealand the rabbit nuisance is now well in hand in all but one or two rough pieces of country. In Australia the droughts, ruinous in other respects as they have been, have at least slain rabbits in millions. Just at present the live-stock inspectors are more concerned with extirpating diseases. Now that scab and pleuro-pneumonia have been got rid of, the chief task of the meat inspectors is to deal with tuberculosis in cattle and with anthrax. In New Zealand thirty-one veterinary officers are kept busily at work. All suspected cattle are tested with tuberculin, and where the signs of reaction are unmistakable are killed. The bodies are usually taken to boiling-down factories, where they are placed in large coppers and steamed at high pressure until, all risk of infection having been removed, they are fit to be used as manure. In order to encourage farmers to co-operate with the officials in submitting cattle to the test, they are paid half the market value for beasts condemned and destroyed, and rather more than £5000 was paid in this way in 1899. The Government makes what it can out of the sale of hides, hoofs, and carcases. The Slaughtering and Inspection Act of 1900 compels every New Zealand town of over 2000 people to provide a public abattoir, where all slaughtering

must be done, and the inspection of which is in the hands of the Agricultural Department's officers. In the great cattle-breeding colony, Queensland, where the herds, even after years of cruel drought—a drought which could kill trees supposed to be a hundred years old—still numbered 5,000,000 in 1900, the cattle put through the large meat-works at that time were nearly 400,000 in the twelvemonth. Though every animal has to undergo inspection, only 607 out of this large number were condemned, most of them for tuberculosis. In New Zealand the average percentage of cattle condemned is but 2·8, and of sheep only ·11, and it is no uncommon thing for the veterinary surgeons to test whole herds of dairy cows without finding a single case of disease.

Several of the departments have imported high-bred cattle and horses, the progeny of which find a ready sale. In New South Wales the imported bulls are leased out to farmers who cannot afford to buy well-bred stock. The Hawkesbury College breeds pigs and sells them at a profit.

Insect pests and plant diseases are watched and attacked. In New South Wales, for instance, the State entomologist lately obtained from South Africa the culture of a certain fungus famous for its power of destroying locusts. A wheat-pest was at the same time engaging the special attention of the departmental chemists, whose business includes the analysis of soils, water, and fertilisers. In New Zealand three fruit experts traverse the colony yearly, inspecting, advising, and giving lectures. All the departments now employ entomologists, though, so long was it ere they awoke to the need of doing so that the first appointment of the kind was not made until 1888, when

Mr. French was selected to act for the Government of Victoria.[1]

In no way, probably,—except, it may be, in stamping out scab,—has Government aid been of more direct and practical value to the producer than in its supervision and encouragement of dairying. The State, indeed, did not invent the centrifugal separator or conceive the co-operative factory; but its instructors preached in season and out of season the use of the machine and the system; and the rural revolution which has given new life to wide tracts in Victoria, New Zealand, and New South Wales has been helped and hastened by State teaching and transport. Twenty years ago dairying in

[1] In the report for 1901 of the Queensland Department of Agriculture, the following comparative table is given :—

COMPARATIVE STATEMENT SHOWING TOTAL STATE EXPENDITURE ON AGRICULTURE, AND EXPENDITURE ON AGRICULTURE PER INHABITANT, IN THE UNDERMENTIONED COUNTRIES

Country.	Gross Annual Expenditure on Agriculture.	Amount Annually Expended on Agriculture per Inhabitant.
		Pence.
United Kingdom	£86,000	$0\frac{1}{2}$
Denmark	190,000	18
France	1,800,000	11
Hungary	2,000,000	26
Austria	1,800,000	17
Belgium	450,000	16
Prussia	1,200,000	8
Italy	120,000	4
Sweden	260,000	11
Switzerland	113,000	9
Argentina	130,000	6
Queensland	49,000	23
New South Wales	98,716	$17\frac{1}{2}$
Victoria	55,072	$11\frac{1}{4}$
South Australia	7,739	$4\frac{3}{4}$
West Australia	6,205	$8\frac{3}{8}$
Tasmania	2,386	$3\frac{1}{7}$
New Zealand	74,581	24

It is explained that Hungary's position is due to the inclusion in her agricultural vote of a heavy sum really devoted to the repurchase of large estates for subdivision into small holdings.

the colonies was still in the dark ages. The first separator in New South Wales was used in 1881; the first co-operative factory in the mother colony was erected at Kiama in 1884. In New Zealand the export of butter and cheese in 1881 was valued at slightly more than a thousand pounds, and for several years afterwards was still too small to attract special notice. Butter was chiefly farm-made, was not seldom bad, and often sold locally for as little as 3d. and 4d. a pound. In Victoria the dairymen were dependent on the local demand, and the industry was stagnant. The rapid growth of the factory system in Victoria—with which the development of colonial dairy-farming began—is usually set down as beginning about 1887, and is, in part at least, due to the energetic encouragement which the new dairying received from Mr. Dow, at that time Minister of Agriculture. His policy was not merely to teach scientific methods and to inspect produce. He began at the beginning. To every factory which turned out a given quantity of butter in twelve months a bonus in money was paid in proportion to its output. No factory was to receive more than £300 in all, or to be given a bonus on more than one year's output. More liberal still was the scale of bonuses offered on exported butter shipped. It was based on the price at which the butter was sold in the foreign market, and was designed to encourage quality. No bonus was paid unless the butter fetched 7d. a pound. This was the scale:—

Price.	Bonus.
7d. and under 9d.	1d. per lb.
9d. „ „ 10d.	1½d. „
10d. „ „ 1s.	2d. „
1s.	3d. „

After being paid for several years the bonuses were discontinued when, in 1895, the export trade was seen to be able to take care of itself. Cool storage for three months for nothing, and an arrangement by which regular carriage to London was provided by the ocean steamship companies, further stimulated the Victorian butter trade. It grew apace, and the colony's export for some years altogether eclipsed anything done by its neighbours. In the eleven years after 1889 its value multiplied more than thirty times. In 1895 its quantity was already 25,000,000 lbs., and its value more than a million sterling. The quality of the butter was excellent, and this was at least partly due to the official inspection before export, which was a condition attached to the offer of bonuses. The Victorians could fairly claim that this superior quality was recognised in the substantially higher price their butter then fetched in the London market. After a time the gap between Victorian butter and that of other colonies became less wide. For the last few years the difference in the London prices of the butters of Victoria, New South Wales, and New Zealand has been trifling. In quantity, however, Victoria is still the chief butter-making colony. Although checked for some years by drought, her export of butter—worth £1,480,000 in 1900, and £1,235,000 in 1901 — has not been equalled. The Victorian exporters of perishable produce have made full use of the cold storage provided by Government. In the twelve years from 1889 to 1901, the value of this kind of produce which passed through the departmental cold stores in Melbourne amounted to £9,648,000. Nine-tenths of it represented butter. In the last year of the twelve three-fourths of the perishable produce sent out of the colony went through these stores. What

the nature of the produce was the subjoined table shows.[1]

New Zealand sends out nearly £250,000 of cheese a year, a trade in which none of the Australian colonies attempt to rival her. Thanks to this, New Zealand's export of dairy produce (£1,125,000 in 1901) is now nearly equal to Victoria's.

Outside the three colonies named, the Australians export no cheese and very little butter; but that the butter of the dairying colonies is of some consequence to the British consumer is shown by the table on the following page.

[1] TOTAL EXPORTS OF PRODUCE THROUGH THE GOVERNMENT COOL STORES, FLINDERS STREET, FROM 1st JULY 1900 TO 30th JUNE 1901

Great Britain.	South Africa.	Eastern, Inter-State and other Ports.	Grand Total.	Description of Produce.	Value c.i.f.
11,307½	817	70	12,194½	Tons butter	£1,301,76
...	...	432	432	Crates cheese	1,08
854	1,329	4,387	6,570	Cases condensed milk and cream	8,21
20	7,687	4,500	12,207	Dozen eggs	50
1,477,227	7,521	23,900	1,508,648	Pairs rabbits	94,29
72	32	8	112	Pairs hares	2
...	46,463	5,362	51,825	Heads fowls and chickens	8,47
104	7,263	1,489	8,856	Heads ducks	1,32
61	2,010	932	3,003	Heads turkeys and geese	90
59,414	35,814	739	95,967	Carcases of mutton	47,08
...	204	...	204	Carcases of calves	40
268	136	368	772	Carcases of pork	1,34
...	168	...	168	Sides of veal	16
312	...	...	312	Legs of mutton	4
...	5,159	16	5,175	Quarters of beef	12,93
37	781	87	905	Pieces of beef	90
550	19,710	1,110	21,370	Lbs. of sundries	44
				Grand total	£1,479,02

[TABLE

EXPORT OF BUTTER TO GREAT BRITAIN

	Victoria.	New Zealand.	Other Australian States (chiefly N.S. Wales).
	cwts.	cwts.	cwts.
1897 . .	169,075	76,522	25,278
1898 . .	124,223	69,949	42,982
1899 . .	211,744	111,639	52,425
1900 . .	264,603	165,871	86,554
1901 . .	186,141	167,343	59,650
	955,786	591,324	268,889

New Zealand, Tasmania, and the eastern and south-eastern fringe of Australia outside the tropics, are almost ideal lands for the dairyman. He escapes the droughts of the Australian interior, the diseases of the tropics, and the hard unproductive winters of Canada and Denmark. The policy of his Government is to find cheap land for him. Much of this, such as the soil of the forest tracts of north-western New Zealand, and of the "big scrubs" of the northern river valleys in New South Wales, is rich and will nourish the finest pasture. In New Zealand the dairyman has the special and very great advantage of being able to grow English grass; his cows are fed on the clover, rye-grass, and cock's-foot of the old country. In none of the colonies is it needful to keep cattle sheltered and confined in stalls during the winter, and the amount of hay and fodder used by them would seem astonishingly small to the European cattle-owner. Given a steady market at paying prices, and a co-operative system under which a good article may be manufactured and shipped regularly, and dairying is placed comfortably outside the region of speculative enterprises. England supplies

the market, and the dairy factory, usually though not always a co-operative factory, does the rest. In less than twenty years whole provinces in the three dairying colonies have been dotted with dairy factories. They are vigilantly watched by Government. In the last seventeen years 164 butter factories and 368 creameries have been built and worked in New South Wales. In New Zealand at the end of 1901 the butter and cheese factories and skimming stations numbered 512. In Victoria in 1899 the figures were — Dairy factories, 212; creameries, 382.

The co-operative dairy factory—that happy blend of individualism and collectivism—is usually the outcome of a series of meetings and discussions by the farmers of a countryside. They gather together to talk it over and to listen to explanations from experts. Probably they hear an address by one of the officials of the department of agriculture, who will tell them that if they decide to set up a factory the Government will furnish them with approved plans and specifications. Supposing the momentous step to be taken, the company to be formed, the shares subscribed for by the farmers, and the factory set up, money is not wasted over it needlessly. It is a plain, unpretending wooden affair, whose shareholders' object is not architecture. When, a year or two ago, the directors of a certain Victorian butter factory sanctioned the laying down of a white marble floor, the shareholders grumbled loudly at such wicked waste, though, it is said, the comfort and cleanliness of the arrangement converted, in time, all the farmers who saw it. What the dairymen want is the best machinery and the best manager that money can buy. Their building must be clean; and the inspectors see that it is. So important are machinery

and management, that the tendency grows stronger every year to centralise butter- and cheese-making in the larger factories, and to be satisfied to have creameries or skimming stations in each small subdivision. In any case, no stage of the making process is now left in the farmer's hands. His business is to keep good cows, milk them, and, without wasting time, carry their milk to the factory in clean cans properly covered up. There it is tested, and he is paid according to the quantity of butter-fat that his milk yields. Thus he receives daily a practical lesson in the comparative values of dairy stock. After a year of milking for a factory the thickest-headed cowkeeper perceives that a good cow is more profitable than a bad, while the one eats no more grass than the other. Dairying is always laborious work. Where a settler with but small capital takes up uncleared land and has to hew his home out of the forest, his first years are toilsome and anxious. But when the intense labour of bush-felling, scrub-clearing, and fencing is over, and the grass has grown, the dairy-farmer's life, though rough, has since 1888 almost ceased to be one of anxiety. The farmer, relieved of the trouble of butter- or cheese-making, and of the doubts and difficulties of selling, is able to devote himself to his grass and his cattle, and to the work of milking. We see thus organisation and the division of labour yielding the best results—better butter and cheese, better cattle, prosperous farmers, and more of them. Whole districts have been reclaimed from the swamp and the forest to be turned into dairy-farms, and though here and there a dairyman may make life a slavery in order to beat a record of the number of cows milked daily, it would not be easy to find a race of peasant farmers in any part of the world whose lot is

happier than that of the smaller colonial dairymen since the coming of the factory system. As for the larger dairy-farmers, they may, and often do, earn very substantial incomes.

In the year 1899 it was estimated that the butter produced in the six colonies which now form the Australian Commonwealth amounted to 103,000,000 lbs., of which more than four-fifths was made in Victoria and New South Wales. In sharp contrast the amount of cheese made was less than 11,000,000 lbs., of which again the greater part came from Victoria and New South Wales. In the same year New Zealand made 31,000,000 lbs. of butter and over 13,000,000 lbs. of cheese. Most, though not all, of the lead held by the three colonies just named is to be put down to their development of the factory system. In New South Wales the output of butter in the ten years between 1890 and 1900 nearly doubled, and five-sixths of it had come to be factory-made. Ten years ago less than half of it came from the factories. In Queensland in 1901 the exports of butter, though still small, show a rapid increase, and there also the stimulus was found in the factory system and the department of agriculture.

The departments of agriculture mainly help dairying in two ways—by teaching and by inspection. Instructors are sent to and through every district to hold meetings, and to give addresses and practical teaching in the factories. In 1900 Mr. Potts, the scientific instructor in dairying employed by the Victorian Government, reported that he had travelled 19,688 miles and given 3894 hours to public duty. Armed with microscope and "a portable bacteriological outfit," this energetic gentleman had lectured at thirty-five central factories, and to fifty-four popular audiences,

and had given twenty-five lessons to State schools. He had visited one hundred and seventy-six farms and talked to their owners at their homesteads; had attended eight agricultural shows, and as many meetings of boards of directors; had visited Tasmania at its Government's request, and given seventeen lectures there in three weeks; and yet had found "considerable time" to devote to laboratory work. What Mr. Potts was doing in Victoria, Mr. O'Callaghan and his staff were doing in New South Wales, and Mr. Ruddick and his three assistant instructors in New Zealand.

In Victoria most, and in New Zealand all, of the butter and cheese exported is stored by Government in cool stores in the seaports. After meeting with much opposition, the Victorian Government managed to obtain power from Parliament to have all dairy produce inspected and graded before export. On boxes of inferior butter is put what is termed the "pastry" brand. In New Zealand dairies have to be registered and inspected, and official grading has been a feature of the export trade for the last six years. During these years the export of butter and cheese has grown steadily. The quantity of butter sent out has trebled, that of cheese has doubled, and the value of the whole trade has passed a million a year. Five inspectors are regularly engaged in examining and branding all shipments as they lie in the cool stores before leaving the colony, and a produce commissioner meets them on arrival in London, and repeats the inspection in the Thames docks.[1] In New Zealand the graders' reports on

[1] The New Zealand Dairy Industry Act of 1898 is worth reading, as showing the extent of State regulation which the colonial farmer not only permits, but welcomes. Here is a quotation from it of interest to the British consumer:—

Export of Dairy Produce.

25. The Governor may, from time to time, by Order-in-Council gazetted—

butter are accepted as the basis of all sales. Cheese, too, is often sold under the same stipulation. For some time the officials only graded butter and cheese exported to the United Kingdom. Two years ago, however, at the request of the makers themselves, the system was extended to dairy produce sent to Australia—the buyers had demanded this. For some years the Government made arrangements by which cold storage was provided free of cost at the port of departure for all butter and cheese awaiting export. Since the 31st March 1899 the providing of cold storage by Government has ceased to be a mere friendly service done at the exporters' option. All butter intended for export must now be sent to one of the Government's cool stores to be graded there. The agricultural department pays the cost of placing cheese or butter in the official stores, and of taking it out; and if the butter be destined for Great Britain, will freeze it after grading, and give it and cheese alike storage until the departure of the first home-going steamer with space available for it. If the produce is to be sent to Australia, the storage is given for a week only. In 1900, however, it was decided that the time had

(1) Appoint any specified ports to be the only ports at which dairy produce, or any specified class or description thereof, may lawfully be exported, either generally or to any specified country or colony;

(2) Appoint fit buildings to be stores for the storage, cooling, or freezing of dairy produce prior to export;

(3) Prescribe the mode in which and the conditions subject to which such stores shall be used under this Act.

26. No dairy produce shall be shipped or placed on board any vessel for exportation from New Zealand unless—

(1) Such dairy produce is in all respects sound, in good condition, and free from disease; nor unless

(2) The requirements of this Act relating to such produce, and to the inspection, grading, and marking thereof have been duly complied with; nor unless

(3) The vessel is in all respects in a fit and proper condition to receive the dairy produce, and also is properly equipped with all appliances and requisites necessary for the safe carriage thereof in good order and condition through the whole of the intended voyage:

Provided that nothing in this section contained shall apply to dairy produce shipped on any vessel for the sole use of the passengers and crew of the vessel on the intended voyage.

come when the butter-makers at any rate could afford to pay for storage, and a contributory charge was made at the rate of 2½d. per month or part thereof for every fifty-six pound box that passed through the cool store. So far the New Zealand Government has made no systematic attempt to imitate South Australia in taking the place of commercial middleman. It occasionally takes charge of and sells, through its produce commissioner in London, some small experimental consignment of such goods as poultry and fruit sent home to test the English market. It has acted as agent for the British War Office in buying oats and horses in the colony—that is all. The colony's frozen-meat trade, for instance, is entirely in private hands, though some of the great freezing companies employ, of their own free will, Government inspectors at their slaughter-works. The Government's London commissioner merely watches the trade, and reports once a month to the department. His work is not light, for it comprises the inspection of every cargo of meat and dairy produce landed in the Thames, as well as the general supervision of the course of the colony's trade in the United Kingdom. He has even to do what he can to combat certain British trade practices, which have cost the colonial producers some millions sterling during the last twenty years.

South Australia was one of the first colonies to begin bridging the gulf between the older chaotic condition of things and the present approach to national organisation. The colony has a fertile soil, an educated people, and a hot and dry though healthy climate. Its farmers, coming from Great Britain and Germany, found themselves transplanted to a region more like the shores of Andalusia or Algiers. Their three staples are wheat, wine, and the fleece of the merino sheep. Figs,

olives, and almonds grow luxuriantly in their gardens. Saxons and Teutons set down to farm in the Barbary States would have much to learn, and the first, and even second, generation of South Australians found themselves very much in that plight. For the best part of half a century they were satisfied to depend almost entirely —outside of their copper mines—upon wheat and wool. As grown in South Australia both were good, but the colonists displayed no great originality in their methods of growing them. They used the "stripper" in their wheat-fields, but that they borrowed from America; and they went on raising wheat until, what with over-cropping and want of scientific husbandry, the colony came to regard an average of seven bushels to the acre as almost a bountiful harvest. As early as the sixties wine-growing had become a fairly large industry, but for the twenty years from 1864 to 1884 its progress was arrested; wheat and wool absorbed all energies. In 1885, out of considerably less than three million acres returned as cultivated, two millions and a quarter were under wheat—some of it for hay, most of it for grain. The more thoughtful of colonists saw that this could not go on for ever, and the State set itself to encourage a more varied production. An agricultural bureau came quietly into existence, and began to do good work of the cheaper and more humble kind, by disseminating information by such means as pamphlets, by distributing seeds, and by encouraging farmers to form local branches, the members of which should meet together from time to time to compare notes, discuss experiments, exhibit produce, and hear lectures. So well are these branches now organised, that in 1900 as many as 273 meetings were held. An agricultural college was founded at Roseworthy, thirty-five miles

north of Adelaide. Those who had charge of this experiment made, at the outset, the blunder of placing the farm on poor soil, in a spot where the average rainfall varies from but twelve to seventeen inches a year, and where, therefore, the scope of instruction must be limited, the returns of tillage poor, and garden and orchard work and vine culture heart-breaking occupations.

In 1895 the South Australian Government took a new and very interesting departure. This was no less than the establishment of an office for the export of produce and to dispose of it in London. Its object was to find outlets for the consignments of the smaller farmers, and to help this class to outflank the excessive charges of the middleman. A depôt was established at Port Adelaide at which produce was received, examined, and shipped. Cold storage was furnished for perishable food. The Government was prepared to take delivery of live stock for slaughter, dressing, freezing, and shipping in the same way as any ordinary frozen meat factory. A feature of the depôt's work was the arrangements made for pushing and advertising the colony's wines. These were sent forward to a London warehouse, where they were taken charge of by a qualified expert and were stored and given the rest and racking and other treatment needed to enable them to recover from the effects of the long and sultry sea voyage. They were then placed for sale in the hands of approved wholesale dealers. The Government advertised its wines, but did not retail them. In the year ending with April 1901, 110,000 gallons were in this way sold to dealers in London.[1] Generally, the design of the produce office

[1] The expense of thus pushing South Australian wine in London, though justified by a large increase in the export to England, was not relished by all

was to save the small farmer from unfair risk and trouble. Under its system the grower has to do little more than deliver his parcel at the nearest State railway station and despatch it with needful particulars to the depôt at Port Adelaide. He thus presses the button; the department does the rest. The farmer's exertions are confined to giving a receipt for the cheque he ultimately gets in payment for what he has sent.

For Government to turn exporter was to make precisely the kind of experiment likely to expose it to the angriest criticism and the most aggravated competition. These troubles and others the produce depôt had to encounter. Yet an examination of its reports and accounts for five years show that it is justifying its founders. It began to do business in a small way, and its business is still far from gigantic. But its shipments increase, in the face of some unfriendly seasons, and the public confidence in it grows in equal measure. The

South Australians. A Commission appointed to report on the London branch of the Produce Depôt pronounced in July 1902 that as a whole

it has been of considerable benefit to producers, and more especially to small consigners, by assisting them to find a profitable market for wine, lambs, fruit, butter, and other products, by instructing them in the best modes of packing, and by securing a system of Government inspection.

The Commission had a difficulty in arriving at a judicious decision regarding the wine business. It had been an extremely difficult, as well as expensive, undertaking to establish a wine business in London, and that this had been done reflected great credit on Mr. E. Burney Young (manager). Nevertheless, it was clear that, as at present carried on, the losses on the department must be extensive. To ensure that the profits should meet the expenses it would be necessary to conduct the depôt as an ordinary wine business, and establish the system of selecting and buying in the State wine of the character desired, combined with an extensive blending depôt in London. This the Government could hardly be expected to undertake. The Commission therefore suggest the handing over of the wine business to some private company, which might restrict itself entirely to dealing with South Australian wine, the Government certificate of purity still being a guarantee to buyers. Arrangements should be made, as a guide to producers and shippers, for a systematic inspection and report on perishable products on their arrival in England.

The attached statement of the revenue and expenditure in connection with the depôt showed that the expenditure to 30th April was £32,747, and the receipts £8092, leaving a deficiency of £24,655.

(The above quotation is from a telegraphed summary of the report. The figures refer to the London branch only.)

produce sent through it has almost entirely come under five heads—butter, frozen lamb, frozen rabbits and hares, wine, and fruit. It has not, therefore, touched the staple South Australian exports—wool and wheat. The extent of its operations since its beginning in 1895 are shown by these figures, which give the value of the stuff passed through it yearly:—

Year.	Value.
1895-6	£50,408 14 7
1896-7	23,976 9 2
1897-8	29,336 11 7
1898-9	74,063 1 7
1899-1900	116,132 3 5
1900-1901	141,259 15 1

It is only right to explain that less than one-sixth of this is consigned for sale to the London branch of the depôt. The bulk is passed on to private firms. The balance-sheet of the export department in the last three years of which I have information shows the revenue and expenditure to have been—

	1898-99.	1899-1900.	1900-01.
Revenue	£5,813	£10,904	£14,220
Expenditure	10,301	13,202	16,058

No precise counterpart of these State depôts of produce at Port Adelaide and in London is found elsewhere. In Sydney, however, there is a Board of Exports set up by the Government, which provides somewhat similar help for the small exporter. It was appointed by letters-patent in November 1895 to be a board of advice to assist the Government in promoting the export of produce. It presently obtained permission to rent cold stores, and to store and otherwise attend to small and neglected exports, such as rabbits, hares, fruit, and poultry. It soon came to furnish cold storage, and inspect, grade, brand, and prepare for market many

kinds of perishable and other produce. After being much laughed at and attacked, it, too, has justified its creators. Unlike the South Australian office, it does no selling for its clients. Its services, limited as they are, are growing in public favour, and its stamp on articles is relied on by buyers. In 1900 it was commissioned by the English War Office to supervise the grading and shipment of considerable quantities of preserved meats, flour, and fodder purchased for the troops in South Africa, just as in New Zealand at the same time the Imperial authorities made use of the Government's inspectors to examine more than a hundred thousand tons of oats. Though, however, the Board of Exports has done its work successfully, and so cheaply that in 1900 its yearly cost to the taxpayer was but some £2000, and though, with increasing popularity, it is being called upon to furnish more storage and do more inspecting work, still the scale on which it has hitherto handled produce has been small. The following table from the *Agricultural Gazette* shows this, though it also illustrates the substantial increase of the board's business :—

Values of Goods shipped under the Certificate of the Board of Exports.

	1897.	1898.	1899.	1900.
Passed for export	£6,370	£24,197	£30,800	£173,000
Rejected	1,200	6,000	7,500	13,720

The main current of New South Wales exports—even of perishable produce—has flowed on through customary channels. To find the business of cold storage and of grading and inspection carried on by Governments on anything like a large scale we must still go to Victoria and New Zealand.

INDEX TO VOL. I

Absentee landlords, 262, 266
Acts, Amending, 168
  Repurchase, 269
Adelaide, 37, 45, 208, 218
Advances to Settlers Act, N.Z., 334, 341
  New South Wales, 334
Agricultural Lands Purchase Act, 289
  of Western Australia, 292
Agriculture, 39, 249
  Departments of, 99, 359
Alcoholic Liquors Control Act, 100
Allotment system, 99
Amending Acts, 168
Amendment of the Constitution, 169
Arbitration, compulsory, 70
Artesian wells, 39
Art of Colonisation, Wakefield's, 206, 217
Australian Agricultural Company, 199
  Commonwealth, 64
  Convention, 152
  Natives' Association, 154
Australians and Federation, 151

Ballance, Mr. John, 67, 105, 111, 154, 258, 259, 271, 278, 312, 324
  Ministry, 65, 271, 272
  villages, 313
Barton, Mr., 152, 178
Bicameral Parliaments, 51
Birth-rate, 34
Blacks, 16
Blaxland, Mr., 8
Blockholders Loan Act, 302
Blue Mountains, 7, 11
Bonuses, 50, 372
Border police, 223
Braddon Blot, 171, 173, 179
Butter, export trade, 99, 379
  value of, 38, 372, 373

Cables, 45
Canterbury, settling of, 213
Carnegie, David, 13
Carruthers, Mr., 326
Carruthers Act, 328
Cattle, 30
Central Desert, 14
Cheese, 374, 378
Cheviot estate, 277, 288
Cities, colonial, 37
Clark, Mr., 152, 153, 183
Closer Settlements Act, S. Australia, 295
  New South Wales, 296
Coal mines, 40
  mining, 44
Cockburn, Sir John, 67, 128, 153, 257
Colonial ministries, 65
Colonists as exploiters, 62
  description of, 28, 31
  unrest of, 32
  urban, 36
Commander-in-chief, 161
Commonwealth of Australian Constitution Act, 160
  laws of, 168
  represented by Governor-General, 161
Compensation Court, 287
Compulsory repurchase, 279
  Bill, 285
Conditional purchase of land, 231
Constitution, 170, 176
  Bill, 152, 157, 169, 175
  opinion on, in England, 160
Convention, Australasian, 152
  Federal, 156
Cook, Capt., 3
Co-operative agricultural communities, 311
  contract system, 102
  factory, 372, 376
  settlements, 320
  societies, 306
  villages, New South Wales, 311
Copper mines, 209
Crown lands, 35, 168, 223, 224, 232, 245, 257, 321, 327
  Act, 243
  Commissioners of, 283
Customs and Excise, 252

Dairy farming, 38, 249
Dairying, 371, 375
Darling Downs, 9, 290
Dawson, Mr., 80
Deadlocks, 171
Deakin, Mr., 55
Death-rate, 34
Debt, public, 47
Degrees, University, 46
Democracy, 61
  industrial, 74
Democrat, colonial, 68
  and Federation, 155
Dibbs, Sir George, 78, 98
Drought, 8, 12, 30, 35, 39, 75, 138, 254, 292, 303, 332, 369, 370
Duffy Act, 237

Education, 45
  technical, 47
Edwards, General Bevan, 150
Electoral Act, 183
  in Tasmanian Parliament, 190
Enfranchisment, result of, 139
Experimental farms, 367
Export Office, 383

Factories and Shops Act, 83, 138
Factory laws, 101
Farm produce, 35
Federalists, 146
Federal tariff, 42
  Constitution, 152
  Convention, 156
  Council, 148
  Government, 169
  House of Representatives, 161
  Parliament, 161, 164, 174
    Amending Acts, 168
    High Court of, 166
  Senate, 155, 161
  societies, 155
Federation, 67, 143, 161, 175
  Australians *re*, 151
  in New South Wales, 156, 157
  in Queensland, 156
  in Western Australia, 156
  League, 154
  New Zealand and, 148, 154
  of colonies, 97
Finance and trade, 166
Forrest, Sir John, 65, 133, 134, 148
  Ministry, 17
Fox, Sir William, 141
Franchise to women, 97
  results of, 139
Freemantle, 45
Free trade, 147, 173
  selection, 231, 233, 237, 239
Fruit-growing, 39

Glassey, Thomas, 58
Gold-mining, 40, 44
Government of the Commonwealth, seat of, 168
  experiments, New Zealand, 315
Governments as lenders on mortgage, 329
Governor-General, 161, 164, 165, 169
Graduated tax, 261
Grazing, 38, 226
  farms, 327
Grey, Sir George, 76, 153, 154
Griffith, Sir Samuel, 148, 152, 153
  M'Ilwraith coalition, 64, 67
Ground rates, 264

Hall, Sir John, 105, 109, 139, 179
Hargreaves, 40
Hatuma estate, 286
High Court of Federal Parliament, 166
Higinbotham, 55, 57
Homestead selection, 327
House of Representatives, 163
Hughes, Mr., 89

Immigrants, 50, 100
  grants of land to, 241
Immigration, 33, 249
Imperial statute, 224
  Land Sales Act, 210
Improved farms, 315
Income tax, 259
Industrial Arbitration Act, 101
Industries, 44
Intercolonial trade, 44, 145
Inter-State Commission, 167, 174
  Commissioners, 167

James, Mr. Walter, 134
Johnston, Mr., 188

Kanaka labourers, 100, 162, 351
Kiandra, 5
Kingston, Mr. C. C., 65, 127, 152

Labour laws, 36, 101
  and Federal union, 150
  demands, 94
  excess of, 35
  in Federal Parliament, 84
  members, 76, 86
  Ministry, 65, 176
  movement, 63
    Victoria, 82
    Western Australia and Tasmania, 83
  organised, 74
  party, New South Wales, 77, 153
    Queensland, 79
    South Australia, 81
    New Zealand, 76
Land Board of Queensland, 289

Land, class of, 280
for Settlements Act, 276, 279, 288, 316
grants, 204
laws, 35, 210, 239
question, 192, 237
rating, 266, 267
revenue, 219
selection, 239
tax, 98, 194, 251, 253, 260, 263
and Maori, 262
absentees, 262, 266
New Zealand, 262
South Australia, 257
Tasmania, 254
Victoria, 254
the purchasing of, 279
transfer, system of, 211
transport, 47
Lands Department, 282
Lane, William, 80
Lang, Dr., 146
Laws, registration, 114
Federal Parliament and, 164
repurchase, 268
Lawson, Mr., 8
Leases, granting of, 245, 294
tenders for, 228
Leasing, 223, 225, 226, 231, 244
in perpetuity, 98, 240, 242, 282, 295, 306, 309, 313, 321, 327, 328
Legislative Houses, 51
Leroy-Beaulieu, Pierre, 104
Licenses, pastoral, 219, 224
Loans, State, 47, 301, 308
public, 48
Lowe, Robert, 225, 228
Lumholz, Carl, 16
Lyne, Sir William, 78

M'Arthur, Captain, 199
M'Gowen, Mr., 78
M'Kenzie, John, 272, 278, 284, 286, 293, 314, 324
Mackenzie, Mr. Scobie, 108, 124
Mails, 45
Manufactures, 42
concentration of, 35
Marriage, 100
Meat and Dairy Produce Encouragement Act, 355
Melbourne, 36, 45
Merino, 39, 381
Mining, 38
Ministers of State, 165
colonial, 65
Ministry, changes of, 64
Mitchell, 10
Money-lending, State, 99
laws, 70
Mortgage systems, State, 350

National Council of Women in New Zealand, 140
New South Wales and Federation, 156
Advances to Settlers Act, 347
New Zealand, 21, 27, 30
and Federation, 148, 154
colonising of, 212, 214
Land Company, 213
Progressives, 65
Nicholls, Mrs., 103

Old Age Pensions Act, 138, 139
Oversea trade, 35, 44

Parkes, Sir Henry, 55, 64, 78, 87, 135, 143, 149, 152-154, 178
Parliaments, 51, 63
Australian, 59
Federal, and laws, 164
New Zealand, 59
State, 52
Pastoral leases, 250, 263
licenses, 219, 224
tenancies, 246
Pauperism, 48
Pensions, Old Age, 138, 139
Peré, Mr. Wi, 108
Perpetual lease, 98, 240, 242, 243, 282, 306, 309, 313, 321, 327, 328
Perth, 17
Phillip, Governor, 197
Political economy, 46
Politicians, types of, 53
Politics, 50, 52, 88
Population of towns, 35
Poverty of the people, 48
Produce depôt, State, 383
Progressive movement, 59
party, 105
Progressives, 69, 91, 253
Property tax, 258
Protection, 147
Protectionists, 43, 149
fiscal policy, 42
Public debt, 47
money, 48
Purchase Commissioners, 280

Queensland, 6
and Federation, 156
Quick, Dr. John, 155
Quit-rents, 197, 223, 325

Rabbits, 360, 369
Radicals, 74
Railway, State, 48
Rainfall, 5, 9, 12
Rates, 267
ground values, 98, 264
Referendum, 170

Reid, Mr. George, 64, 78, 98, 135, 156, 157, 159, 178, 252, 326
Representatives in Federal Parliament, 162
in each State, 163
Repurchase Acts, 269, 286, 289
Bill, 275
laws, 268, 297
results of, in Queensland, 291
in New Zealand, 292
Scheme, objections against, 283
State, 271
Repurchasing land for settlement, 287
Richmond, Christopher, 55, 57
River rights, 173
Robertson Acts, 233
Rural life, 30

Savings Bank Amendment Act, Victoria, 334
Schools, 29, 45
Seddon, Mr., 65, 111, 120, 138, 235
See, Mr., 78
Selection, land, 233, 237, 239, 242, 288
Self-government, 51, 146, 196, 231, 232
Senate, 161, 163
Speaker of, 162
Senators in Federal Parliament, 162
Servants, 117
registry offices, 101
Service, Mr., 153
Settlement on Land Act, 318
Settlements, selection of, 288
village, 299
Sheep, 30, 38
shearers, 32
Shops Act, 101
Silver mines, 40
Single Tax League, 298
Slaughtering and Inspection Act, 369
Socialism, 69, 74
Society, 48
South Australian Advances Act, 340
"Closer Settlements Acts," 295, 296
Special Sales of Land Act, 322
Spence, Miss, 103, 131
Squatters, 218, 221, 224, 234, 244, 257
State Advances Act, 340
of South Australia, 334
on Land Act of Tasmania, 334, 347
and representatives in Parliament, 162
interference, 50, 62, 63
landlords, 98
loans, 47, 301, 308
money-lending, 99
mortgage systems, 350
produce depôts, 385
State railways, 100
repurchase law, 264, 271
repurchasing land by, 99
schools, 45
States, admission of, 168
growing, 352
powers of, 170
Stephen Act of New South Wales, 139
Stout, Sir Robert, 57, 106, 111
Strikes, 75
Suffrage League, 126
Sugar Works Guarantee Acts, 351
Sydney, 37, 45, 98, 175

Tariffs, 172, 174, 253
Tasmania, 19, 27, 183
Tasmanians, 20, 189
Tax, graduated, 261
Taxation, 43, 223
indirect, 253
Taxes, progressive, 70
land, 251, 253, 257
Taxpayers, 48, 177
Technical education, 47
Telegraphs, 45
Temperance Union, Woman's Christian, 126, 129
Torrens Land Transfer Act, 211, 331
Townships, 37
Trade and commerce laws, 164, 167
oversea, 35, 44
Tuberculosis, 369
Turner, Sir George, 64

Universities, 45
Upper Houses, 52
Urban congestion, 35

Van Diemen's Land Company, 199
Victoria, 9, 10
Victorian advances law, 345
South Australia, 302
success of, 320
Victoria, 317, 318
law for acquisition of land, 293, 295
Village settlements, 299, 305, 312
Vogel, Julius, 62, 105, 106
Voluntary Act, 276
repurchase law, 278
Votes, 164, 168, 267
contingent, 97, 181
transferable, 188
women, 97, 141
Voting, 164
preferential, 97, 181, 183, 190
plural, 153, 155, 162

Wages boards, 101
trade-union, 102
Wakefield, Gibbon, 200, 202, 213, 216, 225

Ward, Sir Joseph, 334
Watson, Mr., 85
Wentworth, 8, 193, 228
West Australian Agricultural Bank Act, 334
Western Australia and Federation, 156
Wheat-growing, 382, 385
Wills, 100
Wine-growing, 382
Wise, Mr., 57, 79, 135
Women's franchise, 103, 126, 131, 169
  Bill passed, 112, 130
  Christian Temperance Union, 126, 129
  Suffrage League, 126
Wool-growing, 32, 382, 385
Workmen's Compensation Act, 101

Zolleverein, 145

END OF VOL. I

Date Due

v.1-1991

JQ40151902.R4 v.1-19910

REEVES

STATE EXPERIEMENTS IN
AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND.

T4-AKH-323